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THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

'Good luck is all!" the ancient proverb preaches;
But though it looks so very grave and wise,
Trust not the lazy lesson that it teaches,
For, as it stands, the musty maxim *lies!*

That luck is *something*, were a truer story,—
And in life's mingled game of skill and luck,
The cards that win the stake of wealth or glory,
Are Genius, Patience, Perseverance, Pluck!

To borrow still another illustration,
A trifle more specific and precise,—
Small chance has Luck to guide the operation,
Where cunning Wit has loaded all the dice!

The real secret of the certain winner,
Against the plottings of malicious Fate,
Learn from the story of a gaming sinner
Whose frank confession I will here relate:—

"In this 'ere business, as in any other
By which a chap an honest living earns,
You don't get all the science from your mother,
But, as you foller it, you lives and learns;

And I, from being much behind the curtain,
And getting often very badly stuck,
Finds out, at last, there's nothing so uncertain
As trusting cards and everything to luck!—

So now, you see,—which nat'rally enhances
The faith in Fortune that I used to feel,—
I takes good care to regulate the chances,
And always has a finger in the deal!"

ALARIC;

OR,

THE TYRANT'S VAULT.

A SICILIAN STORY OF EARLY TIMES.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

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CHAPTER I.

ALARIC.

Not far from the city of Syracuse—not the Syracuse of to-day, shattered, and narrowed down to a place of little note,—but the Syracuse of an older day—a day long passed—when it was the metropolis of all Sicily, an object of longing to ambitious conquerors, and one of the finest cities in the world; not far from this place, upon the shore of the sea, stood a man who had just landed from a vessel that was now sailing away towards the North. He was quite young—not over five-and-twenty—tall and well proportioned; with a muscular system finely developed; and possessing a face not only striking in its manly beauty, but remarkable, in one so young, for its stern, resolute, and self-reliant expression. His dress was light and simple, and evidently of Greek manufacture; the lower limbs being clothed in close-fitting goat-skin, above which he wore a shirt of white linen, confined at the waist by a belt of fine mail. Upon his head was a cap of woven stuff, the top drooping over the right ear; and his feet were shielded by a pair sandals. His only weapon was a short, heavy sword, which hung, in a leathern scabbard, from his belt of mail. He stood for awhile, gazing about, as though undecided what course he should pursue; but finally he espied an old fisherman not far off, who had just come down upon the beach, and towards him he made his way.

"A bright, pleasant morning, good sir," said the youth.

The old man cast his net from his shoulders and gazed up. He carefully scanned the features before him, and then replied:

"Aye, fair sir, it is a pleasant morning. We have many such on this coast."

"And yet it storms sometimes, I suppose," suggested the first speaker.

"He is a wise man who little heeds the storms he cannot quell," said the fisherman, with a nod of the head, which seemed to give his words more meaning than the circumstances under which they were spoken would imply.

"You are right there," responded the other. "But tell me—where can I find Artabanus, the hermit?"

The fisherman took another careful look into his interlocutor's face, and then answered:

"He lives upon yonder mountain, which is called Catalano. Do you wish to see him?"

"Yes."

"Then follow the path that leads to yonder cot, until it brings you to a small stream. Cross that, and then upon your right hand you will see a beaten track. He lives in a cave near the top of the mountain, and this track will lead you directly thither."

The young man thanked his informant, and was upon the point of turning away, when the latter resumed:

"You are a stranger here?"

"I am."

"But not always so."

"How mean you?"

"You have been in Syracuse before?"

"I said I was a stranger here," the youth replied, with a slight show of displeasure; for the fisherman was still regarding him sharply.

"Pardon," cried the old man. "I mean no offense. Your face looks familiar. It has the cast of a countenance I fancied I had seen before."

"There may be many faces in Sicily like mine, good sir," returned the new-comer, with a light smile.

"There may be, but I have not seen them."

"How now, old man? Why—thou didst but just say thou hadst surely seen one like it."

THE ASSASSINS OF THE VAULT.

"Aye—but that was years ago," rejoined the fisherman, with a shake of the head. "I do not think I have seen such an one of late."

"You'll at least remember of having seen such an one on this morning," said the young man; and as he thus spoke he turned away.

"Aye," muttered the old Sicilian, half to himself, but yet loud enough to reach other ears; *and I call on Neptune to witness that I have seen* it before. Such faces are not multiplied—they are not plenty in Syracuse these times. Alas! more's the pity."

The youth hesitated for a moment, as though he would turn back, but he overcame the disposition, and kept on. When he had begun to ascend the mountain he stopped and looked behind him, and saw that the fisherman was already upon the water.

"Can it be," he said, to himself, "that my face is so little changed? I think I remember that old man, for he has spread his nets long in these waters; but how should he remember me? I pray the gods that there be not many in Syracuse that will yet be so observant."

With this the traveler kept on up the mountain until he had reached a broad table of rock, from whence he could see the bay, and the city beyond. The great metropolis was spread out before him, with its massive walls, its temples, and its palaces, and a tear started down his cheek as he gazed upon the scene. He clasped his hands upon his bosom, and, with a few muttered words, he started on again. He crossed the stream, and took the path to which he had been directed; but he did not follow it as one who was a stranger to its windings He pursued his way with an ease and assurance, and, at times, with an abstractedness which could have been indulged in only by one who knew well the way he was going. Up the steep, rocky hight he climbed, and, when he finally stopped, it was before the entrance to a cave—a cave which Nature had fashioned in the mountain's side, and sheltered from the sun's fervid heat, and the fury of the storm. At the mouth of this cavern sat an old man, over whose head some fourscore years had rolled. His hair and beard were white as the fleecy cloud that sailed above the mount, and floated in silken, wavy masses over his shoulders and breast. A mantle of gray cloth enveloped his frame, and his feet were shod with heavy sandals. He was engaged over an old manuscript, but as he heard the sound of approaching footsteps he closed the volume and raised his head.

"Good morning, my son," he said, with a look of simple welcome.

"Kind father, I greet thee," the youth returned, at the same time extending his hand.

"How!" cried the aged man, starting to his feet, as the accents fell upon his ear. He shaded his eyes with the palm of the left hand, and gazed eagerly into his visitor's face. "Do I see aright?" he added. "Is it Alaric—my old pupil?"

"Aye, good Artabanus, I am Alaric—come once more to see thee."

For some time the hermit gazed into the young man's face in silence, but finally he said:

"Sit down—sit down, my son. Thy presence has started a host of varied emotions to life within me, and I must recover my thoughts ere I can talk with thee in reason."

"Thank the gods, I find thee alive and in health," replied the youth, as he let go the old man's hand, and took a seat upon a wooden bench close by.

"Aye—I am well in body," returned Artabanus. "But," he added, thoughtfully, continuing to gaze earnestly into his companion's face as he spoke, "the body is but a small part of man, and the ills of the flesh are very joys when compared with some of the pains to which the soul may be subject. But tell me of thyself. Where hast thou been?"

"I have been in Greece," replied the youth. "When I fled from these shores, eight years ago, I sought refuge there, and there I have remained ever since. O! I wept this morning, as I gazed down upon the city of my birth. I had thought I had done weeping over those memories; but when I again gazed upon Syracuse they came crowding upon me with a power which I could not resist. I saw the very temple beneath the walls of which my father and my brother were slain; and I could see the roof beneath which my mother died. Artabanus, there were not many of the patrician families escaped that foul butchery."

"No, Alaric. Of all who were loyal to the true interests of the people, I have seen only yourself return. There were a few escaped, but not many. Were there any went with you to Greece?"

"No, father. I escaped alone. I saw my noble parent cut down—I saw my brother fall—and when I knew I had not a relative left in the city, I fled. Fortune favored me. I found a small boat by the sea shore, and I put out alone upon the dark waters. I floated away to Melita, and from thence I gained a passage to Greece. The tyrant still reigns in Syracuse?"

"Alas! yes. And his deeds are evil, and the people suffer. We have had no place in Sicily since good Helixus died. Thou wert but a mere child then."

"I was seven years old. I remember the good king well, for my father, you know, was one of his chief officers."

"Aye—you were older than I thought," said the hermit, musingly.

"And I remember that there was some mystery connected with the good king's death," remarked Alaric. "Am I not right?"

"There was not much mystery," answered the old man. "He was weak and weary, and he left the throne that he might die in peace; and death soon came to him. But why hast thou returned to Syracuse?"

"Can you not guess?" returned the youth.

"I might guess many things, my son."

"And yet but one of them would be right. I have said that I left no relative behind me when I made my escape from this place; but I did leave one whom I loved—one about whom my affections were entwined with a life that could not die. You know of whom I speak."

"Aye—you speak of the mason's daughter, Ianthe."

"Yes, father. Is she alive?"

"She is."

"And well?"

"She is well."

"And," pursued the youth, in a more eager tone, "is she still free?"

"Why? Have you thought that she would remember you in love through the years that have passed?"

"O—do not say that she has not!"

"I have not said so, my son. But you should remember that she was only twelve years old when you went away."

"Yet she possessed a woman's mind. She had learned of you, my master. O! do not tell me that she has ceased to love me. True, she was a child in years, but I loved her then, and my love has grown stronger in the separation which has followed. I know there is danger to me here, but I came with a will to meet it."

"There may be more danger than you think of," said the hermit, watching the countenance of his young friend narrowly as he spoke.

"I care not for the danger. Tell me of Ianthe."

"But suppose your very life were in danger if you sought the maiden?"

"You may warn me of danger if you will, but do not seek to place the barrier of fear between me and my desire, for I know not the emotion. You, Artabanus, taught me when I was a boy, and your wise lessons have not departed from my mind. You taught me that there were many things more to be feared than death, and I have come, prepared rather to die than, live all alone in a distant land, with the sad memories of my unhappy country for my only heritage."

"And you would not turn from death, should it raise its threatening front between yourself and Ianthe?" The old man's gaze grew more earnest as he thus spoke, and a spark, within which seemed to gleam some newly awakened hope, burned in his eye.

"My father," answered Alaric, with a flushing cheek, "I could almost feel offended did I think *you doubted me, but I do not think so. Show me* that Ianthe loves me, and not even Pyrrho himself, with the blood-stained crown of Sicily upon his brow, shall have power to startle me from my course while life is mine."

Aristabanus started to his feet, and grasped the youth by the hand.

"Noble Alaric," he cried, with a joyful enthusiasm, "thou art worthy of the maiden's hand. She does love thee—she cherishes thy memory within her heart as the most precious thing of earth, and for long years she has lived upon the hope that thou wouldst return to her."

"O—the gods be praised!" ejaculated the young man.

"But," added the hermit, in a changed voice, "there must be danger in thy path. Pyrrho holds his throne only through the fear and enslavement of the people, and he knows it. Your father was one of his bitterest enemies, and he was also one of the first whom the usurper found it necessary to put out of the way. You are not only the very image of your noble parent, but you must remember that you had arrived almost at the full stature of manhood when you fled from Syracuse. You were then seventeen, and from seventeen to five-and-twenty, especially in one so early developed as you were, there is not much change. You were a man then, and you are no more now. So you must expect that you will be known and recognized."

"Aye—the old fisherman, whose cot is at the foot of the mount, recognized me as one whom he had before seen."

"You mean Glycon."

"Ah—I remember his name now, though I had forgotten it. Yes—he was sure he had seen me before."

"And remember that he had only seen you occasionally, as you were wont to pass to and from my cave; but there are those within the city who will be sure to recognize you, and should the king, or any of his tools, know of your presence, your destruction would be planned at once."

"And can I be of so much importance as that?" asked Alaric, incredulously.

"Ah," replied the old man, with a shake of the head, "when a tyrant begins to fear his people, it requires but little to magnify his danger. You are the only survivor of the old patrician stock that remains true to Sicily—you are the only living male representative of that noble class who stood around the throne of Helixus. Let Pyrrho but dream that thou art in Syracuse, and he would not sleep till he had thee in his power. Dost begin to see thy danger now?"

"Yes, good father, I do. But I fear it not."

"Be wise as well as brave, Alaric," said the old man, with an admonitory motion of the finger. "The truly brave man is not reckless. He shuns danger when he can do so with honor. Remember that you would not be the sole sufferer should mortal evil befall thee. She whom thou lovest would suffer, too."

"I will remember, father," spoke the youth, with much feeling. "I will shun the danger as much as possible. But—I shall find no home in Sicily, after all, if my life cannot be my own."

"Let us speak of that hereafter," replied Artabanus. "First, do you see Ianthe, and when you have found all right in that quarter, we will consider further."

"I shall find her with her father."

"Yes—and his house is just where it was eight years ago."

"I will go and seek her, then, and——"

"Hold, my son. You had better wait till nightfall ere you enter the city, and also exchange that Greek shirt for a garment less likely to attract attention, for I assure you that too much care cannot be taken."

Alaric was impatient to see Ianthe, but he saw the force of the hermit's reasoning, and he was willing to wait. So he sat down by his old teacher's side again—sat as he had sat years before, when receiving instruction from the same lips—and listened to the story of the wrongs that had been done in Sicily during the last eight years. Hour after hour passed away, and yet Artabanus had still more to tell of the tyrant's cruelty.

"Merciful heavens!" cried the youth, fired almost to frenzy by the recital, "how have the people borne all this?"

"They have borne it under fear of their lives. Pyrrho's soldiers are posted at every place where a murmur can arise."

"And how long shall it last?"

"Till some spirit, with a heart big enough to love Sicily more than life, and a soul that fears not the tyrant, shall arise in Syracuse!" pronounced the old man, solemnly.

Alaric started as he met the glance of his aged companion, for there was a meaning in it of more than mortal import. He dared not trust himself to speak then, for the feelings that had sprung to life in his own soul were so wild and strange that they fairly startled him. He arose and walked out upon the mountain, and ever and anon, as his eye rested upon the distant city, the tumult in his soul came to startle him again. He did not seek to analyze the emotion, for it was so bold and gigantic, so genie-like in its misty proportions, that he dared not handle it with reason.

After a while Artabanus came out and touched him upon the shoulder.

"Alaric," spoke the old man, "it is waxing late, and we may be on the move. Let us eat a crust of bread, and then we will descend the mountain together. I must go with you as far as the fisherman's cot, for there we must find a more fitting garb for you. Glycon is my friend, and may be trusted to the verge of the grave."

The frugal supper was soon despatched, and then the two descended the mountain together. At the fisherman's cot they stopped, and found *that Glycon had just returned from his day's la*bor. Artabanus took him apart, and having explained to him as much of Alaric's story as he deemed advisable, he asked for some garments that would answer for the youth to wear.

"I knew I had seen the young man before," cried the fisherman; "and when he had gone this morning, I could have sworn that he used to be one of your pupils. I remember very well how he used to pass here when——"

"Never mind now," interrupted the hermit, impatiently. "We are in a hurry. At some other time we will talk it all over."

Thus admonished, the fisherman led the way to his scanty wardrobe, and the necessary garments were soon selected. Alaric's leggins of goat-skin were replaced by long hose of blue cloth, and his white linen shirt was exchanged for a dark brown frock, beneath which he could easily conceal his short sword. After this the hermit accompanied him to the southern shore of the bay, and there stopped.

"We had better not be seen together beyond this point," said the old man. "From here the way is plain, and you have had caution enough. At the gate you will not be stopped, unless some of the guard should take the whim to question you. Be wise, now, and cautious, and let me see you to-morrow."

"I will not forget."

"Then may the gods guide and protect you."

With this Artabanus turned back towards the mountain, and Alaric kept on. The shades of night were gathering over the city as the youth passed in at the broad gateway, and the guard had already lighted their torches. He had gone a few steps when a rough voice commanded him to stop.

"Didn't you promise me a fish for my dinner, thou lying knave?" the voice continued.

"You have mistaken your man," said Alaric, hiding his face as much as possible without seeming desirous so to do.

"Good Bacchus, so I have. Thou'rt not Mestor."

"No," returned our hero; and as he spoke he kept on.

"That's a strange face," said one of the soldiers.

"And I thought, a fair one," added another.

"How now?" asked a third. "Has a stranger passed?"

"Yes—a fisherman."

"'Tis said that a Greek vessel was upon the coast this morning, and we should know whom the landed."

Alaric heard no more. He turned the first angle in the street that presented itself, and then hurried on. The way was familiar, and he had no difficulty in selecting the various avenues he needed to follow, but he was not wholly easy. He had reason to believe that he was followed. He took several winding passages for the purpose of avoiding pursuers, but he could not get rid of the echoing foot-fall that sounded upon the pavement behind him. It slackened when he slackened—it stopped when he stopped—and when he hurried on the echo hurried after him.

CHAPTER II.

IANTHE.—AN ALARM.

Within a comfortably furnished apartment of an humble abode near the western wall of the city, sat two individuals. The first was a man some fifty years of age, stout and muscular in frame, and wearing the garb of an artisan, with the dust of toil still clinging to him. He possessed an

open, kindly countenance, and if it lacked in comeliness, it certainly made up in honesty and frankness. Such was Bellerus, one of the most skillful masons in Syracuse, and possessing a fair knowledge of architecture in its higher and more elaborate branches. A genial, comfortable disposition had led him into society of his own choice, and an antipathy to turmoil and strife, and an unwillingness to assume much responsibility, had kept him from rising to any eminence in his profession. There may have been another cause for his retaining his humble position, though every desire of his social life seemed to be answered where he was.

The other person—the mason's companion—was a female. She had seen just twenty summers, and was as beautiful as the poet's dream. In form she was light and graceful, her limbs full and round, and her whole frame full of life and vigor. Her features were of true Grecian mould, with large, dark eyes, over which drooped long lashes of silken texture, while a mass of wavy tresses clustered about her superbly rounded shoulders. Beyond the few honest friends who sometimes partook of the artisan's hospitality, she was not known. Bellerus had guarded her with a miser's care, and few there were in the great metropolis who knew of the treasure of beauty that dwelt within his walls. The humble craftsmen who shared her father's confidence loved her devotedly, but they loved with a worshiping love, as the kneeling shepherd loved his goddess; and they were all pledged not to speak of her in their intercourse with the outside world.

"Don't call me foolish, father," said the maiden, imploringly.

"I do not call thee so, Ianthe," the mason returned. "I only wish to help you over what may prove a most bitter disappointment. How can you hope that Alaric will ever return?"

"My love tells me so."

"Ah—but love is blind."

"Then its feelings are the more to be relied upon, for they come from the internal promptings of the soul. But I feel sure that he will come back to me."

"I hope he may, my sweet child, and if he could know how good and how beautiful you are, I am sure he would. But remember—you were only twelve years of age when he went away."

"And if I have remained true to the love of that early time, how much more should he have done so, who possessed the soul of manhood within which to enshrine his pledge."

"Aye, Ianthe, I know you have the strong reason of love on your side, but there are other things to be considered. Think of the danger he might encounter by coming here."

"I tell thee Alaric fears no danger," cried the beautiful girl, with enthusiasm. "His soul is a stranger to such an emotion."

"And yet he fled from it when his kindred were slain."

"But not alone through fear of death," quickly replied Ianthe. "He fled from a sense of duty. There was no reason why he should remain, but every reason why he should flee. You do wrong, father, when you call his courage in question."

"Pardon, sweet child! I meant no such thing. What! I call in question the bravery of Alaric! Shall I cast a doubt upon the true courage of the son of the noble Orneus! The gods forbid! I know his soul well."

"I did not think you meant it, father. But answer me this one thing: Is there in Syracuse, a man whom you would have me marry, should Alaric never return?"

"My eye has not rested upon such an one, Ianthe. *I speak not from such a motive.* When I bid thee cherish less hopes of Alaric, I do so because I fear he may never find thee."

"Then be at ease, good father. Only last night the bright goddess Electra appeared to me in a dream, and told me that Alaric should return. At least I will hope yet awhile longer, for it is sweet to hope."

Bellerus could not find it in his heart to do more towards dispelling the bright promise which the maiden cherished, and he turned the conversation upon another topic. Only a few words had been spoken, however, when a loud rap was heard without, and the host lighted a torch and went to the door. When he returned, he made a motion for Ianthe to leave the room.

"It is a stranger," he said, "and it is not meet that thou shouldst be present."

But the maiden neither spoke nor moved. She had heard the tones of the visitor's voice, and her quick ear had caught a familiar sound. Bellerus would have reminded her again, but the stranger was close behind him, and quickly entered the apartment. Ianthe saw not the humble fisher's garb—she only saw the well remembered features which she had carried within the sacred repository of her affections for so long a time. They were changed a little—they had assumed more of manhood—but not changed to love.

"Sweet Electra, my dream is true!" she cried, as she started forward and put forth her hands. "*Alaric has come!*"

"So Heaven looks down with richest blessing!" the young man responded, as he folded the maiden to his bosom.

"May the gods preserve me!" exclaimed the old mason, gazing upon the youthful pair in wonder. "I hope this is no trick of Thaumas to blind me. Alaric, is it thou?"

"In truth, good Bellerus, it is," returned our hero, extending his hand as he spoke. "Surely thou shouldst know me."

"Aye, and I do know thee now," the host responded, grasping the youth warmly, and gazing eagerly into his face. "By the crown of Pluto, I could not mistake that face. Thou art grown wondrously like thy noble father."

"Then I hope I may emulate his virtues."

"I hope you may—I hope you may,—and I think you will. But is it thou? I 'faith, I can hardly believe my own eyes. I know that face can be none save Alaric's, but should my eyes play me false!"

"They do not play the false, my father," said Ianthe, winding one arm about the youth's neck, and reclining her head upon his bosom, "for my heart yearned towards him at the first whisper of his voice."

"Aye," responded Alaric, folding the beautiful maiden once more to his bosom, "love like ours need not fear deception."

"I am satisfied," replied Bellerus; "and it gives my old heart new life to find so glorious a satisfaction so easily."

The trio were soon seated, and when they had regained somewhat of their composure Alaric gave a brief account of his adventures during his absence from Sicily. Ianthe sat all the while with her head upon his bosom, ever and anon lifting her eyes to catch the warm glances of his love. At length the old craftsman went out, and the lovers were left alone. They told over the tales of affection they used to tell in other years, and for an hour the world was shut out from their thoughts."

"O!" murmured Ianthe, after Alaric had imprinted a warm kiss upon her brow in token of the renewal of his most solemn pledges, "now that thou art near me, and my fount of love is full, I begin to fear the dangers which may beset thee."

"Let us not think of danger now, my beloved," replied the youth. "This should be a season of joy and happiness unalloyed."

"Aye—but we should not forget that there is a future, and that we must be watchful of the joys to day it we would have them with us henceforth."

"Thou art right, Ianthe. And I will be watchful. I know there is danger in the way, but I fear it not."

At this juncture Bellerus returned in haste, and there was a look of trouble upon his brow. He closed the door behind him, and then turned towards our hero.

"Alaric," he said, evidently striving to assume a calmness which he did not feel, "have you any reason to suppose that your entrance into the city this evening was particularly noticed?"

"Why do you ask?" demanded the youth.

Ianthe had watched her lover's face, and she saw that he was startled; she saw that he had some cause for alarm.

"Speak!" she cried, starting to her feet, and seizing her father by the arm. "He has cause for fear."

"Beloved," spoke Alaric, gently putting her back into her seat, "let us understand this matter. Be not alarmed for me." Then turning to Bellerus he continued,—

"Now what has happened? Why do you ask such a question?"

"First answer me," returned the old man, hurriedly.

"Well—I think my entrance was particularly noticed."

"And do you think you were followed on your way hither?"

"I thought I was."

"Now why have you asked all this?" demanded Ianthe, eagerly.

"I'll tell you," answered Bellerus. "I have just come from the inn near the Temple of Diana, where I overheard a conversation between two soldiers who had just come from the Southern gate. They said that a Greek vessel was seen upon the coast this morning, and that some one landed from her. I also made out, from their conversation, that the king had been informed of the fact, and that he had given orders that every stranger who entered the city should be watched, and intelligence of his whereabouts conveyed to him."

"And does the Sicilian monarch descend to such narrow surveillance?" asked Alaric.

"He is obliged to," replied the mason. "His throne is upon so frail a foundation that a passing breeze of trouble might overthrow it. His fears are constantly excited, and wherever they turn, there he sets his minions upon the watch. The approach of every vessel is reported to him, and if a stranger lands he is sure to be watched until his business is ascertained."

"Then I may be assured that I have been followed," said our hero, "for I suspected it while on my way hither."

"And if such be the case," added Bellerus, "we shall hear more from it."

"But before we wait for that we'll take some steps of our own," cried Ianthe. "Some safe hiding-place must be found."

Alaric was upon the point of speaking when a loud knocking was heard without, and a voice demanded entrance in the name of the king.

"Fly! fly!" cried Ianthe, seizing her lover by the arm.

"Hold," spoke Bellerus, who became calm in *the presence of this necessity.* "*If he flies he will not escape now, for our house may be watched upon all hands*; and if he is caught in the act of fleeing, a deeper and more deadly suspicion may fasten upon him."

"Right," quickly returned the youth. "As matters now stand, if there be danger we must look it in the face. But I trust there may be no cause for alarm."

"Alas! you know not the fierce cruelty of the wicked king," said Ianthe, still clinging to him.

"I know my own honor and innocence," responded the youth, "and I fear not to meet him."

Another thundering knock was heard, and Bellerus started towards the door.

"We must meet it now," he said, "though I wish I had known your coming had been noticed. Ianthe, you had better withdraw."

"Not while——"

"Hush! In this I must be the judge. For the good of him you love I bid you seek your own apartment."

"Aye," added the youth, leading her towards the inner court, "do as he bids you. I shall be safe enough. At all events, I will see you again."

He kissed her and blessed her; and she passed from the apartment just as the host unbarred and opened the outer door. She stopped and caught her lover by the hand ere she left him, and, with a heavy fear upon her heart, she asked him to be careful.

"The thought of thee shall be inducement enough to that end," he replied. "And now may the gods be with us both."

In a few moments more Bellerus returned, and with him came four soldiers. They were stout, hard, looking men, whose hearts performed no other office than to furnish them with animal life that they might do the bidding of their master. One, who wore the uniform of a lieutenant, advanced from his companions and gazed into our hero's face.

"You entered the city this evening?" he said.

Alaric hesitated for a moment, but during that short moment his mind was made up. He quickly judged that any falsehood might only injure him, and he resolved to tell the whole truth.

"I did," he answered.

"And you landed from a Greek vessel this morning?"

"Yes."

"Then you will go with us to the royal palace."

"But why is this?"

"Because the king has so commanded."

"Shall I see him to-night?"

"We came not to answer questions—only to command your attendance at the palace," said the lieutenant, gruffly.

"Our gracious monarch will evidently see you to-night," interposed Bellerus, who saw the flash of indignation in Alaric's eye, and feared that he might make matters worse by giving way to his feelings.

The youth saw the old man's meaning, and he curbed his rising emotions.

"Are you ready to go?" asked the officer.

"At any moment."

"Then we have nothing further to detain us here."

Alaric put on his cap, and as they passed out through the narrow passage Bellerus found an opportunity to whisper in his ear:

"Be cautious—keep a guard upon your tongue—mention not Ianthe's name, nor suffer any allusion to her to drop from your tongue. Let us hope that the danger is not great."

And yet there was a tremulousness in his tone—a terror in his very breathing—that belied the words of hope he spoke. Until this moment the youth had not felt serious alarm, but as he caught the look of horror upon the honest artisan's face, the bolt struck to his own heart.

"The gods be with thee!" spoke Bellerus, as they reached the porch.

But Alaric made no reply. At that moment a weighty thought was upon him, and before he could call his senses back for an answer he was hurried out into the street. The officer walked by his side, while one of the soldiers led the way, and the other two fell in behind.

A variety of thoughts occupied Alaric's mind as he passed on through the narrow, dimly lighted streets. He remembered how he had seen his father cut down, and how his brother had been butchered; and the same bloody tyrant who had done it had now sent for him. Is it a wonder that, with all his bravery, the youth felt a cold chill creeping about his heart as he approached the lair of the remorseless monarch.

CHAPTER III.

DARKNESS AND DOOM.

Pyrrho, king of Sicily, sat upon his throne of gold and precious stones, and about him were a few of the hardened, cruel, subservient men whom he dared to trust. He was a middle-aged man; short and clumsy in stature; with a face broad and brutal in its expression, and strongly marked by dissipation and debauchery. If he had ever possessed the assurance of a brave man, he had lost it now, and his only hopes of safety were in the willing swords about him, and in the terror which his cruelty inspired. The light from three huge chandeliers of massive gold cast a strange luster over the large apartment—the beams being here reflected from polished mirrors; there from pillars of marble and porphyry; and anon taking deeper hues from the gaudy tapestry that hung upon the walls.

"I would like to know who this stranger can be," said the monarch, turning to his chamberlain.

"Your majesty may soon see," replied that high functionary, who seemed a fit man for the place he held under such a master.

"The lieutenant who had the guard at the Pheron gate said he had a suspicious look. By the goddess Diana, I fancy not the free incoming of suspicious men. I tell thee, Donatus, there's a ripeness among my people even now, which might burst into most exuberant rebellion from the passing of one hot breath of sedition."

"I think you overestimate the evil, sire," replied the chamberlain Donatus. "There may be uneasy spirits in Syracuse; but your firm friends are many."

"I trust they may be," the king returned, with a nod of the head, and a compression of the lips, which would seem to imply that he was prepared for enemies. "But," he added, in a different tone, though his brow was still dark and contracted, "what of this masonic craftsman, to whose dwelling the stranger was traced?"

"You speak of Bellerus?"

"Yes."

"I know nothing of him, save that he is an humble man, and one well versed in his calling. Did you ever suspect otherwise?"

"If my memory serves me right," muttered the monarch, bending his head until his brow rested upon his hand, "there was something in his movements, or he was overheard to say something, which did once excite a doubt in my mind. But that was years ago—perhaps before I became king—*so it may pass, and he can be watched if need be. Ah—here comes the lieutenant. We shall see.*"

There was a movement among the guard at the lower end of the chamber, and presently an officer approached the throne, leading Alaric by the arm.

"Is he unarmed?" the king cried, as his eye rested upon the youth's tall and sinewy frame.

"He is, sire. We found only a simple sword upon him, and that we took from him."

A contemptuous look overspread the youth's face as he thus found a monarch so fearful; but when he gazed full upon the features of the tyrant who had slain his loved kindred, an expression of deadly hate swept over his noble brow, and a keen fire burned in his dark eye.

"Ye gods!" gasped the king, as he caught a full view of the youth's face, with this deep expression from the soul upon it, "what have we here? Come no nearer! guard him well! Who art thou?"

Had the sword of death been at that moment suspended over our hero's head, and ready to fall at a breath, he could not have curbed the emotions that swelled in his soul. In all his nature there was not one principle or incentive that could lead him to bow and cringe before one whom he so utterly despised and detested. Had he thought of the future he might have spoken differently; but he thought only of the present and of the past—he thought only of the bloody wrongs that had been done, and he allowed his soul to have full sway.

"I am Alaric," he answered, looking full into Pyrrho's face.

"*Alaric! Alaric!* What Alaric art thou?"

"Hold, sire," interposed the chamberlain, who had been regarding the youth narrowly. "Methinks thou should'st know that face. He is the son of Orneus."

"Ha! Now, by the gods, I know him!" cried the king, starting up from his seat, but quickly sinking back again. "Art thou the son of the patrician Orneus?"

"When my noble father lived I was his son," the prisoner replied.

"And when your noble father died you fled from the country?" said the monarch, with sarcastic emphasis upon the words he had repeated from the youth's speech.

"I did flee," was the reply.

"And have you been absent ever since?"

"I have."

"Where?"

"In Greece."

"Why hast thou returned now?"

"To see the land of my birth."

"And you came for no other purpose?"

"I could have had no other."

"Then why that humble fisher's garb?"

"Because in station I am as humble."

"As the poisonous reptile crouches low upon the earth when on mischief the most intent," said the king, with a look of mingled fear and hatred into the youth's face.

"Those who suspect easily may easily suspect without a cause," replied Alaric, returning the monarch's glance.

"Aye—thou showest in thy speech the spirit of extreme humility thou did'st bring with thee. But say—who came with thee?"

"I landed alone upon these shores, your majesty, and had no thought but to find a friend; and then, if need be, to leave the country again."

"And who is this friend you sought?"

"A bosom friend of my early youth, whose influence extends not beyond the walls of her home."

"Ah—a female, eh?"

"Yes."

"And lives she with the artisan Bellerus?"

"I went there to seek her!"

"And there you found her?"

"I heard of her there."

"Answer me!" cried the king, in a voice of rage. "By the sacred crown of Jupiter, thou had'st better bite off thine own head than answer me again as thou hast done. Who is this maiden thou hast come to seek?"

Alaric hesitated ere he replied to this. He remembered the warning he had received from Bellerus, and he began to feel that he had been too rash in his speech. But he had no choice now. If he refused to answer, the king could easily send to the dwelling of the mason, and thus matters might be only made worse.

"She is the daughter of Bellerus," he finally said.

The monarch gazed into the youth's face for some moments without speaking. There was a look of deadly meaning upon his hard features, and his fingers moved nervously over his knees. At length he turned to his chamberlain, and said:

"This is a curious freak of circumstance. But the young man is like a stranger in our city, and we must provide for him—at least for awhile." Then turning to Alaaric, he added:

"Since I have had thee brought hither against thy will, thou shalt be provided for during the night."

"I can easily provide for myself, sire."

"Aye—but we do not choose that thou shouldst be put to that inconvenience. We have room enough, and to spare; and it will afford us true gratification to know that thou art cared for."

Alaric could not mistake the meaning of these words. The look which accompanied them was a sufficient key to their import. But he could do nothing now to help himself. He could only trust to circumstances as they should present themselves.

The king called one of his officers to his side and whispered something into his ear, and then turned once more to the youth.

"It is waxing late now, and we all have need of rest," he said; "so thou shalt be conducted to a place of safety until the morrow."

"But, sire," interposed our hero, "why should you keep me here to-night? I can be found when you want me."

"We are not so sure of that. But it is our will that you remain.—Hippon, you will conduct him to a place of rest, and report to me when thou hast done it."

The man thus addressed approached our hero, and placed his hand upon his arm.

"Come," he said.

Alaric started as he heard the tones of that voice, for they sounded like a knell. The word was not spoken as speaks one who leads a guest to a quiet chamber.

"Go with him," spoke the king.

Alaric turned, and was led away. In an anteroom his conductor was joined by four dark, sinister-looking men, who had more the appearance of common ruffians than waiters upon a king, and then he was seized by both his arms, and hurried on through a vaulted passage to a dimly-lighted corridor. Presently the officer, who was Hippon, the jailer, stopped at a deep niche, where a guard was posted, and procured a torch, by the glaring light of which he led on once more.

On, through dark and narrow passages—and down, down, down, long and steep stairways, the youth was led; and when his conductors finally *stopped, Hippon opened a door of solid metal,* which swung out from a jagged wall, and the prisoner was forced roughly in.

"You'll find rest here," the jailer said, raising the torch above his head, so that he might the better gaze around.

It was a narrow, damp, noisome dungeon, far down in the depths of the earth, with no couch, no chair—nothing but the jagged, slimy walls, and the dripping roof and festering floor.

"Why am I here?" the youth cried, as soon as he had opportunity to witness the horrors of the place.

"For safe-keeping, I should judge," replied Hippon, with a cruel leer.

"Is it meant that I shall go out from here alive?"

"You should know the disposition of our gracious majesty well enough to judge of that for yourself, I ween."

As the jailer thus spoke he motioned for his companions to leave the dungeon, and he was about to follow them, when the prisoner again addressed him:

"Answer me one thing: It can do no harm for me to know the truth: Am I to die here?"

"I know not. Yet I will tell thee this: If it has pleased Pyrrho to determine upon thy death, thou'lt not be kept long in waiting."

With this the man withdrew, and the massive door was closed. It was shut with a dull, heavy sound, the reverberations being drunk up by the solid walls as soon as they fell upon the air—and the prisoner was left in utter darkness. He closed his eyes, and then opened them again, to see if some glimmer might not be found to break the horrible gloom; but it was all in vain. He groped his way to the wall, and leaned against it for support, for there was no seat save the floor.

The youth was not long in making up his mind that he had been doomed to death. He knew the character of the monarch, and that no deed would be too evil for him. He knew, also, how fear could make the tyrant more cruel than before, and to what deeds of darkness the fear-stricken usurper can descend.

"And," mused Alaric, as he wiped the gathering dampness from his brow, "I am one whom he may have occasion to dread. My presence in Syracuse not only calls up old scenes in his own mind, but he knows it must call up the same recollections in the minds of others. My father was much honored by the people, and many who are now living loved him well. My presence would annoy the tyrant—and he will not surely be worried if he can avoid it. I am in his power so completely that hardly a soul in Sicily would know that I was gone.—Woe is me," he added, after a few moments of silence, "why should I doubt? Why am I here, if it be not to die! My fate has been pronounced in Pyrrho's mind, and my doom is fixed!"

It was a terrible thought, and for a while Alaric was inclined to blame himself for what he had done; but when he came to reflect upon the transactions of the day, he could not see how the present result could have been avoided. It had flown from causes over which he could have exercised no control without the power of foreknowledge. He thought of Ianthe, and he wondered if he should ever see her again. The chances were against it, but he was not prepared to give up all hope. He had just started to grope his way around the slimy wall, when he heard the sound of footsteps without, and presently the moving of bolts fell upon his ear. In a few moments more the door of his dungeon was opened, and three men entered, one of them bearing a flaming torch. They were huge fellows, clad in somber garbs, and each bore a naked sword in his hand. Alaric recognized those garbs, for he had seen them years before, and he knew that only the executioners wore them! The moment his eye rested upon the grim visitors, he knew that his doom had been spoken, and that the time for execution had come! Instinctively he placed his hand upon his hip, but there was no weapon there. He was all unarmed, and seemingly powerless against the gigantic ruffians. The man who held the torch leaned it up against the wall, where a projecting point of rock helped support it, and then the three approached the prisoner.

"How now?" spoke Alaric. "What is your business here?"

"A foul business, you'd say if you knew it, my master," replied the leader of the infernal trio, in an unfeeling tone; "but when 'tis done, we'll do it so well, you won't know we've done it at all."

Was there any mistaking this?

"I am to die!" the youth said, with his hands clasped upon his bosom.

"We've all got to die some time, and those who die first will get the sooner out of a very wicked world. And since you know what's coming, I suppose you'll take it as easily as possible."

What a lifetime of thought and feeling was crowded into the next moment! The three gleaming swords were raised, and the doomed youth saw them pointing surely towards his heart. There was no escape by flight, for between him and the door advanced the workmen of death! There was no hope in his own strength of body and limb, for, unarmed as he was, the power opposed to him was unconquerable. So he leaned back against the reeking wall, and shut the horrid monsters from his sight.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

BLOOMING ANEW.

BY AUGUSTA HERBERT.

If the love of the heart be blighted
It bloometh not again;
If that pleasant song be forgotten
It can be learned no more. TUPPER.

Sweet, sad, melodious, dear poet; but not *true.* Though sung and resung by poet after poet, and though believed in by very youthful lovers, it is in direct contradiction to facts. Granted that there are particular cases to which this sentiment may apply, but they are abnormal.

The normal and healthy state of the human heart tends to recuperation. However rudely its powers be smitten down, they will soon begin to lift themselves anew; and they return to, and often far surpass their former strength. It is in love as in everything else—and only a diseased and morbid heart, whose first love was sinful idolatry, will be able (trying never so hard to be inconsolable) to prove that to lose love's object, forever destroys the power of loving. Wounds must smart and bleed, and *some* wounds bleed as if the life were gushing out; and they smart terribly and long; but unless the life *do* sink and go out in the struggle, the worst wounds will certainly heal. This is the gift of God. A most miserable set of wretches would men be were it not so. Smiles and gladness would soon be gone from earth for ever; for who *has not had* some of his loves blighted?

And this elastic power of the mind applies as well to the love between the sexes as to any other love. Every day some heart [illegible] that it is to. What a pity that poetry and romance should, in this regard, be so widely divorced from reality. What person of sense can really suppose that a jilted man or woman, no matter how entirely the ungrateful object of their affections may have been beloved, is always going to pale and sigh beneath the willow, when in the world he may find the real worth which imagination saw in the deceiver. Away with such a sentiment; forsake and forget the lover that has forsaken you; and you will soon learn to regard yourself happy to have so seasonably escaped. More than this—this old love will prove a stepping-stone to another far higher and better. Be above *trying* to look forlorn and heart-broken a minute longer than the feeling really lasts; it will twist and wring you hard enough for its time; but, as sure as storms pass, it will leave you, and that in spite of all your holding on to it; as you may do, from an idea that it is a sign of a deep and true nature to be inconsolable under such a loss. It isn't; it's a mark of *weakness.* The truly strong and noble seek to rise and to bloom anew in whatever part of themselves has been made desolate. When the blow falls, be it desertion or be it *death*, bow to it; let grief have sway; *this* is permitted—it is natural and right. But when the re-action comes *don't check it;* lift up your head and smile, or *laugh*, if you want to—'tis time, the new buds are starting. When you feel the new tendrils of affection reaching out, feeling hither and thither for new objects about which to twine, don't catch them back and force them down as if they were a shame and a reproach to you. Let them go—it is *time* for them to start, a higher power than yours directs them; and soon fresh and fragrant blossoms will be waving above the old—*thriving* by their decay.

The part of wisdom is, when deceived and forsaken, to thank God for the deliverance; and to seek for *better* friendship or love; and when death tears from your heart and arms "the desire of your eyes," to comfort yourself with what remains to you, and to do all you can to supply the vacant place; not forgetting the true and loving dead—*rather* the now *really living*—but passing as happily as you can the time between the parting and reunion with the souls that your soul loves. No man, no woman is *dearer to the dead* for refusing consolation from the living, and growing useless from fruitless sorrow.

THE PRAYER OF FAITH.

A little boy and his brother were lost in a Western forest. On giving an account of the circumstance after they were found, the little fellow said: "It grew dark, and I kneeled down and asked God to take care of little Johnny, and then went to sleep." How touching! how simple! how sublime! That was true faith—that was genuine prayer. David himself did not exceed it when he said: "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety." Perhaps the little boy learned his lesson of trust in God from the royal Psalmist.

GOOD.

We overheard a queer thing from a little fellow about six years of age, a short time ago. The subject of "wedding cake" had been introduced in the course of conversation, in which the father was taking a part. "Father," said the little fellow, after having apparently reflected intently on something, "I sha'n't send you any of my wedding-cake when *I* get married." "Why so?" was the inquiry. "Because," answered the little fellow, "*you didn't send me any of yours!*"

SONG OF A FLOWER IN AUTUMN.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

The South wind seeks her golden halls
  In fear far o'er the shadowy Main;
The melancholy plover calls
  Along the wildly withering plain,
While furious drives the sleety rain,
And, trembling, moans the smitten mere
  Whose waters shall not glow again
Within the sad and dying year.

II.

Ah, South wind! thou shalt come once more·
  Ah, lake! another waking spring
Will see thee by thy graceful shore
  At thy old silver whispering;
  And birds will spread a joyous wing—
But for the flower, the gentle flower,
  What do the heartless tempests bring
But death in her beloved bower?

III.

Yet let me think of all the past
  With golden days and gladdening light
The sweet, the pensive shadows cast
  From all the starry wings of night;
  At morn, the red-bird in his flight;
At noon, on me the bee's soft breath;
  At eve, some lovers met for plight—
These soothe the bitterness of death.

IV.

Yes, heartless storm! I smile on thee,
  Thus beating on my withered breast
That graced in youth the rosy lea,
  That was in Heaven's own jewels drest;
  That heard the maiden's love confest:
To death I meekly bow my heart
  And whisper to you darkening West,
  "Within Creation's mighty plan,
Even as the deathless soul of man,
The dying flower hath done her part!"

LOST IN A CAVERN.

As you approach the harbor of Matanzas from the sea, having lifted the blue loom of the mountain range of Cuba, the most prominent landmarks that meet the eye are the "Paps of Camarioca" in the distance, and the "Pan of Matanzas" nearer at hand. The former are twin peaks, the highest elevations of the continuous sierra, which, forming the back-bone of the island, extends longitudinally through it, from East to West. The latter, which takes its name from its fancied resemblance to a loaf of bread, is a high, isolated hill to the right, and in the rear of the city. At its base flows the sluggish stream of the Yomori, a little river which, partially obstructed by a luxuriant and matted growth of mangroves, debouches into the head of the bay. This stream, at its mouth, is spanned by a beautiful bridge, which, seen from the anchorage, adds much to the picturesque effect of the view.

The "Pan" in the rear, and the range of hills on the right, overlooking the castle of San Severino, are clothed in tropical verdure. The symmetrical and graceful palma real and the cocoanut palm form the most striking feature of the landscape. Their tall, tapering boles, crowned with plumy coronals of dark green fronds, stand out in sharp relief against the bright, deep blue of the cloudless southern sky.

A nearer approach to the city by no means diminishes the beautiful effect of the picture. The low but substantially built houses are brought more distinctly to view, while the hills, sweeping gently [illegible] on which the town reposes in oriental indolence, are blossoming with coffee gardens, and golden with the fruit of orange groves, and the innumerable luscious products of tropic regions.

Within the fossiliferous limestone rock, of which the Cuban hills are formed, are found many fissures and caverns, some of which have been explored to a great distance. These caverns afford hiding places for runaway slaves, who, amid their intricate recesses, may remain safely concealed for years. At night they venture forth into the plantations, and loading themselves with plunder, return to their concealment, where the day is spent in alternate feasting and sleeping, the African's only conception of happiness being the gratification of his appetites and indolent inactivity.

There is one of those caverns within the bowels of the Pan. A short ride on horseback brings you to the base of the hill, or, if you prefer it, you may employ a boatman, and row up the Yomori to within a short distance of the mouth of the cavern.

A tortuous pathway leads up the rocky eminence till you arrive at the face of a cliff, where opens a beautifully formed gothic arch, the entrance to the "Cave of the Conspirators," (*La Cueva de los Conspiradores,*) so called from its having been, in the times of the Carlist war, the meeting-place of a political organization, whose object was the independence of the island.

This cavern had become, of late years, the resort for parties of pic-nic-ers from the town. Within its cool and spacious chambers were found delicious fountains of pure water, and the myriad stalactites suspended from the high arched ceilings, lighted up by torches, made one of the most brilliant spectacles in nature. Its surpassing beauty and magnificence can be imagined only by those familiar with the story of the fairy creations of Aladdin's lamp.

In the center of the principal chamber, a large stalagmite rising from the floor, and spreading out from a slender foot-stalk, like a gigantic mushroom, served the purpose of a table. Around this other lower stalagmites, the droppings of centuries of the limestone in solution, were arranged at convenient distances for seats. In fact, nature seemed to have had the fitting up of this magnificent place as an appropriate reception room for the gods, and a more delicious retreat from the sounds of the city, and the heat of the tropic beams, the gods themselves could not have imagined.

One day a number of gentlemen were assembled under the quarter-deck awning of an American ship lying at anchor in the bay, and while admiring the fairy landscape about us, the high headlands which I have described naturally enough attracted our attention, and the conversation turned upon them. I had been speaking of the "Pan," and the remarkable cavern within its bowels, when our entertainer, Captain Bowen, proposed an excursion to the mountain, and the cave of the conspirators.

In accordance with this arrangement, the morning light found us early abroad, provided with attendants, and all the necessary adjuncts for a social enjoyment of the day.

We proceeded up the Yomori in boats, and after furnishing ourselves with a guide at the *sitio* (small farm) at the foot of the "Pan," climbed up some little distance, and, arriving at the low cliff, reached the entrance, and prepared for the exploration.

We had scarcely entered the cavern, when, on turning an abrupt angle of the perpendicular walls which formed its sides, we were unexpectedly saluted with a burst of music; and, at the same moment, were almost blinded by a flood of light, which reflected among the stalactites from a hundred torches, filled the chamber with myriads of resplendent gems suspended from the overhanging roof. Who had prepared for us this almost royal reception we were ignorant, till, turning to our creole companion, and detecting a peculiar smile upon his face, we accused him of being the author of the compliment, an accusation to which he immediately plead guilty.

After spending more than an hour in this magnificent apartment, and sitting down to an excellent dinner, served upon the natural table, and enlivened by music, while the torches still lighted up the brilliant scene, Captain Bowen, and myself, who had come especially prepared for an extensive exploration of the cave, directed the guide guide to lead the way, promising our friends to return in a couple of hours, at the farthest.

At the side of the chamber we were now in, about half way between the floor and the ceiling, the guide pointed out an opening in the rock, up which we were to climb by a rope-ladder, being the stem of a cocoa-nut palm, the natural notches of which served as foot-holds for us. This opening was like the mouth of an oven, and scarcely two feet in diameter, making it necessary for the ambitious explorer to crawl through it upon his hands and knees.

Provided with ropes, we followed the man up the ladder, and entered the narrow passage. Along this we followed for some ten or twelve yards, when our further progress was checked by a yawning gulf of blackness before us.

"Now, senores," facetiously observed the guide, "we must have recourse to the ropes. We have to descend into *El Purgatorio*, (purgatory,) for you know through that lies the road to the heaven beyond."

We threw the light of our torches into the black pit, and drew back with dread. A wide, deep cavern lay beneath us, and a cold, damp wind blew up, and flared our torches. A raw, earthy scent pervaded the place like that of a long-deserted catacomb. We were assured, however, by our guide, that the passage, though a damp, and somewhat muddy one, was perfectly safe. We threw a torch into the pit, which fell upon the floor, some twenty feet below; and burning with a faint glimmer, partially lighted up the place. Though deep, it was not of great extent; and the remnants of ropes, and ladders, and broken bottles, showed that it had been frequently visited before.

The guide, fastening a slipping-noose of the rope around a stalactite, dropped himself into the pit, and we soon followed him. The horrors of this "hell" we found were more imaginary than real, for on reaching it with our torches all its repulsiveness was changed to beauty. The place, of late years, being but rarely visited, its snowy stalactites were comparatively unstained by smoke, and glistened like jewels, pendent from the gothic arches overhead.

There was a strong draft of air through this chamber; an indication that the cavern communicated with the outer world, by other passages than the one by which we had entered.

On a level with this floor, we joined another passage, which, like the outer one, was short, and led into a high, vaulted chamber, like that in which we had left our friends. Here the music, and sound of merry voices from the outer chamber became faintly heard; and in a few moments, as we proceeded, became lost altogether. We were now deep within the rocky bowels of the Pan. Still we continued to pass deeper and deeper into the mountains, till we reached what the guide declared was the termination of the cavern. And such, in fact, it appeared to be. But by holding our torches close to the walls, and minutely examining the cracks and crevices of the rocks, we detected what at first sight appeared to be a fracture in the perpendicular wall; but which, on closer examination, proved to be a natural opening, filled up neatly with loose stones. I immediately perceived that they were not only artificially arranged, but some of them were of a different character from the rock of which the cave was formed—they were round and water-worn, while others were broken stalactites. A few kicks of our heavy boots soon demolished this feeble barricade, and we found ourselves in a wide, spacious room, one of wider dimensions than we had yet encountered.

Here our guide refused to accompany us any further, declaring that no amount of money would tempt him to penetrate beyond this point. He had no doubt the cavern was full of runaway negroes, and it was as much as our lives were worth to invade their hiding-place.

The captain and myself, however, were determined, as we had proceeded so far, to make a thorough exploration; and sending the trembling creole back to the first chamber for fresh torches, we sat down and awaited his return. When the guide returned we renewed our examination, leaving him to go back to our friends, with the assurance that we should not be long absent.

We now followed a tortuous passage, sometimes ascending at a gentle inclination, then abruptly dropping down, making it necessary to resort to the use of our ropes, a good supply of which we had retained—now coming to a large, high, vaulted chamber, brilliant with its myriad stalactic gems; and now climbing up the sides of the walls to reach the continuous passage. Thus we passed along for several hundred feet, when we came to a side passage, or branch of the main cavern. Keeping to the right we continued along, admiring the flashing splendors revealed by our torches. As we proceeded, the branching passages continued to increase in numbers; still endeavoring to keep to the right, we pressed on, till at length, finding them apparently interminable, we concluded to return upon the back track. But, to our alarm, we found that in our eagerness for exploration we had involved ourselves in a labyrinth of passages, without taking the precaution to mark the way we had come.

When winding through a narrow passage, where we were certain we discovered objects, we had observed, as we came along, we would suddenly find ourselves entering a large cavern, whose dimensions could not be reached by the light of our torches,—or as suddenly finding ourselves standing upon the brink of some fearful, and apparently bottomless gulf, down whose yawning depths, but another step would have precipitated us.

We were uncertain which way to turn;—indeed *we were lost!* But the currents of pure air, which occasionally reached us, as we turned some angle of the cavern, were scented with the breath of the outer world. The fragrance of the tropics, were borne to us, in the deep bowels of the earth; and still inspired us with courage and hope. The glowing beams of the sun, could hardly have been more hopefully cheering.

Still we continued to thread passage after passage, and chamber after chamber, till tired out with the exertion, we were obliged to throw ourselves upon the damp rock, and rest our weary limbs.

On examining our watches, we found to our horror, that we had been wandering through this subterraneous labyrinth more than five hours! Added to this,—our torches, which were tin tubes filled with oil, were nearly burned out; but still they threw out a flickering light, which my companion proposed to economise, by extinguishing his own, and continuing our search by the light of mine only.

On we stumbled through the winding passages,—the currents of air increasing in draught as we proceeded,—till as we were turning a short angle, a stronger draught, than we had before encountered, struck my torch. The wick, being but partially saturated with the remaining drops of oil, held on to the flame, by a slight tenure; and before I could shield it with my hand, it flared up,—struggled an instant for life, as if loath to leave us, in this our time of greatest need,—and then,—darkness, palpable and rayless, walled us in.

The captain groped for me, and handed me his tube, in which remained a little oil. But alas! it too was no longer of any service to us; my matches had become dampened in my pocket, and refused to ignite. Now, despair indeed awaited us. I threw myself, exhausted and hopeless upon the damp floor of what I had no doubt would prove our last resting place. We were already ensepulchered in a tomb, in which, perhaps the foot of man would never again intrude;—and burying my face in my hands, I resigned myself to our dreadful and inevitable fate.

It is said that drowning men, in the last struggling gasp of life, behold, in one vivid, lightning flash of expiring, earthly intelligence, all that they have ever felt, done, or known, in the entire course of their lives. I believe it,—for in that fearful moment, there came crushing through my brain, all the good and evil I had ever done;—every thought, which had had birth there, was again reviewed;—all the loved faces of wife, children, and friends, came crowding upon each other, but each in regular, though rapid succession. Each thought, each deed, each face, each hope or aspiration appeared distinct and unconfused.

I was lost to our hopeless situation, in observing these mental phenomena, as they filed in rapid procession through my excited brain;—till aroused by a sudden, glad exclamation from my comrade—

"Oh! what do I see!" and laying his hand upon me,—he shouted, "I see a light! I see a light! There is yet hope for us, my friend! do you not behold that loom in the distance?"—and as I sprang to my feet, he grasped my hand and turned me in the direction from whence a faint loom, as of a distant light, partially hid by some intervening object, was plainly to be seen. There was no mistake;—there was a light indeed. Losing all sense of weariness, in the excitement which followed this sudden renewal of our hopes, we groped our way along the narrow passage, in the direction from whence emanated the light.

Our progress was necessarily slow; but still the loom became brighter and brighter, as we advanced; till at length, on turning slightly to the right, the bright, clear, unmistakable rays of a fire broke upon our sight.

However, there being no alternative, we determined to enter the chamber cautiously, and looking about us, take advantage of what a nearer inspection might suggest.

In the center of the cavern, near the fire, a circular basin held the droppings of water, which, falling from the point of a huge stalactite pendant from the roof, made a musical and lulling sound. Stretched near the margin of the basin, lay the almost naked forms of four stalwart negroes, buried in sleep. Their loud snorings filled the overhanging arches of the cavern, and added to the weird-like character of the wild scene. No doubt we might have crept upon them, as they thus lay helplessly before us, and have despatched them with their own knives. But what would this brutal act have improved our situation? We required their kindly offices to guide us from the cavern; so, stooping behind a large stalagmite, we raised a loud shout. The sound had no sooner escaped our lungs than the startled negroes sprang to their feet in alarm, and snatching up their heavy cane knives, placed themselves in a position for a desperate defense.

"Who dat?" cried one in negro Spanish.

I replied, in the same language, "We are friends who have been lost in the cavern. We mean you no harm."

"Are you white men?" asked the same voice.

"Yes;" and I hastened to add, "we are no Spaniards, but friends of the poor black man."

"I know that voice and that gigantic form, or I'm greatly mistaken," now whispered the captain in my ear; and then, raising his voice, he cried out in English—

"Simon, my good fellow, is that you?"

"Yes, massa," returned the astonished negro, as the weapon fell from his hand, and he advanced a step or two towards our concealment; "yes, massa, dat me for sartin, and I tink I sarve (know) dat speech; you massa Cap'n Bone—no?"

"Yes, Simon, it's I," replied the captain, as he stepped boldly out to the African, and offered him his hand. The latter received it respectfully, and kissing it, placed it upon the top of his head. As I witnessed this last motion, I knew we were safe; we were among friends, and I stepped from behind the stalagmite, and joined the strange group.

My friend had recognized in the huge negro an old stevedore, who had often labored on board of his ship. One day, in defending himself from the brutal assault of his Spanish overseer, Simon had inflicted a severe blow upon the face of that individual, and, while the Spaniard advanced upon him with his drawn machetta, the negro leaped into the harbor, and, being an expert swimmer, as all Africans are, he reached the shore and escaped to the mountains, and subsequently, as it appeared, to this cavern.

"Simon," said the captain, "will you guide us out of this place to the light of day?"

"Yes, yes, massa Cap'n, I will show you out, for sartin; but, massa," continued the wily African, "is dat buckra ship of yours in de harbor now?"

"Yes."

"Well den, massa, you help Simon, and Simon help you. I tink dat fair, anyhow. You save Simon, and dese boys yar, and wes be your good niggers, sure."

I immediately saw what the cunning black was up to. Our deliverance depended upon his own. He thought that one good turn deserved another, and so I suggested to my friend.

"Yes—I understand," replied the captain; "you mean if we will help you on board of my ship, and then off the island, you will conduct us from the cavern?"

"True, massa Cap'n, dem's jus' wnat I mean. You send a boat up de ribber some dark night, and take us out dis yer hole, and Simon will show you and dat odder massa safe out."

"Is that the only condition of our deliverance, Simon?"

"Dat's a fac'!" replied the negro, in a determined manner, which convinced us that his mind was made up. And there being no help for it, the captain agreed to the fellow's proposition. The African knew he had the advantage of us, and we could not blame him for making the best of it.

"Now, Massa Cap'n, swear for truff dat you send your boat up de ribber, and hide us for sartin on board your buckra ship."

"Yes, Simon, I swear I will be true to you. Now show us out to the warm sunshine and the breeze again."

A few nights after this adventure, the gallant ship commanded by my fellow explorer of the "Cave of the Conspirators," taking advantage of the land breeze, which blows only between the setting and rising sun, was sailing quietly out of the harbor, and as her white sails were illuminated by the moonbeams, she was seen to lay to, as if waiting for some one yet to board her from the shore.

Presently a dark object floated noiselessly under the trellised arches of the light bridge which spanned the Yomori, and as it cleared the shadows, a number of persons, besides the rowers, might be seen reclining in the bottom of a ship's boat. Now it passes under the walls of the castle of San Severino. The ever watchful sentinel, as he marches with measured step up and down his beat, casts his eye upon it; but it is a frequent sight, the gliding of boats about the bay at night, and when he hears from the guard-house the familiar challenge, "*Sentenel alerte!*" replies, "*All is well!*"

A few days more, and Simon and his comrades of the cavern were assisting in the unloading of the good ship that had borne them safely to the metropolis of the New World.

DEER IN MISSOURI.

BY ONE WHO LIVED THERE.

There used to be a man in our place who made it his whole business to hunt deer. I had the only wagon in the village, and he found it very convenient for bringing home the deer he killed. The common price of venison was from twenty-five to forty cents a quarter. Many a whole deer I have bought for a dollar. The hunters keep the hide; so that you know, when you make a bargain for a deer, that you are not to have it. The man would often come to me and say: "I want your wagon; I have killed a deer." When he brought it home he would give me a quarter for the use of the wagon.

It is a remarkable fact, which is not generally known in the east, that, in that part of the western country, the deer multiply as population and the cultivation of the land increase. This continues for a time, until the population reaches a certain point; and then the deer soon cease to be abundant, and gradually disappear. This is owing to the preference these animals have for cultivated crops, and the superabundance of food which the fertile soil affords when tilled. The farmers have not time to exterminate the deer; and they generally have much more corn, etc., raised than they can consume or sell. Deer, therefore, are often seen in the corn-fields; and, although one or a few may now and then be shot, immense herds are roaming about the country; and they continue their depredations, while the farmers give themselves very little trouble on the subject. The deer there migrate north in the hot season, and return to spend the winter, living on corn, which is left standing till spring. I have seen as many as five hundred deer on a cultivated prairie at one view, and perhaps I might say a thousand. There were several prairies in my district, some of them uncultivated, and every season burnt over, either by accident or by design. I must tell you something about how the deer and some other animals manage when the prairie is on fire.

I was once crossing one of our prairies on horseback, when I saw a heavy smoke at a distance, and smelt it plainly in the air. Not being at that time much accustomed to western life, I paid little attention to the smoke, until I found it was coming fast towards me, before a pretty fresh wind; and I soon saw fire in the grass, at no great distance, on my right. I then recollected stories I had heard of burning prairies, and the danger to which travelers had been exposed by them, and hurried my horse forward, thinking I should be out of harm's way. But, to my dismay, I found the fire moved faster than I did, and soon reached the very border of the road, which had been sufficiently traveled to destroy the turf all along its line. The air began to feel warm, and now and then a breath of wind would reach me which was really hot. I pressed on faster and faster, congratulating myself that the fire could not cross the road, and hoping I should be able to reach a belt of timber which I saw before me, though much further off than I wished. The appearance of the fire was new to me, for now and then a sudden flash would appear in the midst of the smoke above, and sometimes a streak of flame would strike, almost like lightning, from a considerable hight in the air, down upon the dry grass, many feet in advance, and kindle it in an instant. This must have been caused by the sudden rise and descent of a small current of highly heated air, which, strange as it seemed, had still heat enough in it to kindle grass. This was so ominous that it made me shudder, for it seemed to prove that the fire might at any moment cross the path; and then I should have it on both sides, and probably all around me. My horse was not long in feeling some effect of my new fear, and, under my blows, strained himself to the utmost. We flew on; and the flames, smoke, and crackling of the conflagration kept pace with us; when, to my new dismay, an eddying cloud rose higher than usual above my head, and then, curling suddenly over, descended on my left, when a flash of fire struck from it, and the grass blazed up on the prairie on that side of the road, and ran before the wind like a race-horse.

When I saw the fire thus spreading for a mile on the other side of the road, I felt almost desperate; but I continued to press on my horse, and was soon encouraged by seeing that I was within a moderate distance of the belt of timber, where I knew I should be perfectly safe, if I could once reach it. I had before been assured of this by old inhabitants. It was one of those places where a small stream of water keeps the ground so moist for some distance, that the grass does not become dry enough to burn in the season when fires, if once kindled on the dry part of the prairie, will run freely over it, wherever the direction of the wind may incline them to go. Trees and grass are usually found in such places; and "belts," as they are called, are valued for several reasons, especially by travelers and new settlers. Observation and reflection may tell a man why a belt should offer a secure refuge from a prairie fire, but the animals appear to arrive at that knowledge by at least as short and unerring a guide.

When I reached the shade of the first tree I felt perfectly safe, and checked my horse; going a few steps further, I threw myself on the ground to rest, and allowed him a respite. And there I found we were in the midst of a very heterogeneous company. Here were several deer, grazing or browsing; there was one which had just come in, like myself, after a long race for life from the prairie fire, lying on the ground, exhausted and panting, with his tongue hanging out at its full length. Near by was a wolf, crouched down as if either afraid or tired, but without any appearance of ferocity. Wild hogs and several other animals I saw of different species, most of which appeared to feel quite at ease; and all seemed to have a perfect understanding that there was a suspension of hostilities and antipathies in that place of common refuge. The impressions made on my mind by the aspect of things around were altogether new and peculiar, and can never be erased from my memory. It seemed as if a general amnesty had been proclaimed, together with a general assurance of protection against every injury and danger, by some authority which, although invisible, was acknowledged and confided in by all. The powerful and ferocious appeared to hold it in awe, and the most weak and timid fully relied on it for guardianship: so that, while the wolves, and other beasts of prey, were silent and quiet, and had lost every appearance of ferocity, even from their eyes, the deer lay fearlessly down, or calmly grazed and browsed close at hand. Some of them remained within a few yards of the blazing conflagration, which had reached the borders of the belt at the same moment that I entered it, and was now crackling and roaring around us. But what struck me with still greater astonishment was, to see snakes of different species winding their way here and there about the ground, almost under my feet, and passing quietly among the various animals so strangely associated around me. They, too, evivently, partook of the general impressions which controlled the others, for they gave no offense, and seemed entirely deprived of all disposition to resent one.

I would add that most of the four-footed animals appeared to have been in the belt for some time; and this, no doubt, was the fact; for deer, and I presume most other wild creatures, perceive the smoke of a burning prairie long before it is distinguishable by human organs, (unless perhaps those of Indians,) and usually save themselves from exposure by a timely flight. Now and then they are overtaken by a change of wind, or other accident.

CLAM-BAKES.

This term is familiar to persons accustomed to fishing-parties or pleasure-parties on some parts of our sea-coast. It first became familiar in the newspapers in the time of the Dorr disturbance in Rhode Island, about twenty years ago, when political meetings used to be collected under the name of Clam-bakes. It is commonly reported, and probably true, that the practice was derived from the Indians, who were very fond of clams, and made them an important article of food. Heaps of clam-shells are still to be seen, in many places, on and near the shore of the Ocean, where clams were found, from one extremity of our country almost to the other. In one neighborhood on the Connecticut shore, they were burnt for making lime, and the supply lasted for some years, there being an extensive bed of the shells. The Indians there often strung clams on long spires of grass, dried them in the sun, and carried them into the interior, to boil with their succotash, (green corn and beans).

At a clam-bake a party of persons join for a feast, and often prepare for it by catching their own clams. This is done by pleasure-parties of farmers, who, after harvest, often visit the seashore, "*to salt*," as it is familiarly called. Grotesque scenes are often displayed, by groups of them wading out from the beach at low-water, dressed in their coarsest clothes, feeling for clams with their feet, picking them out of the mud and putting them in boxes which they push along before them in the water.

The process of cooking clams at a "*bake*" is this: They are placed upon the sand, on a flat rock, close together, with their mouths downwards, and a heap of sticks is laid over them and set on fire. Some old hands at "clam-bakes" say that the muscle at the hinge of each clam should always first be cut through, with a knife; but other experienced "artists" pronounce such a practice heterodox. Some, also, declare that it is indispensable to surround the bed of clams with a circle of large stones, pressed tight against them; while others say the contrary. Probably experience renders different practices successful. Dividing the back-muscle would certainly prevent it from opening the shells, when contracted by the heat, and the stones surrounding them would have the same tendency, thus saving the fluid parts and keeping out sand.

Clams cooked in this manner are commonly thought to possess a better flavor than those served up in the house; but this may be imaginary. A merry party often adds its attractions to the repast; and clam-bakes, especially in the evening, and at a picturesque spot on the coast, sometimes afford quite an interesting spectacle to an observer. While the clams are baking, a party of young people sometimes dance in circles round the "bake;" and the darkness on the earth and the water, gives great brilliancy to the fire and its reflections on the rude coast scenery, and the gay and animated figures in the foreground.

LAKE MEMPHREMAGOG.

I was very much disappointed, said a visitor to that lake, by the inferiority of the scenery to that around Lake George. There is a very good hotel near the shore of the lake, opposite which is an island a mile or more in length. It is chiefly low, but terminates in an abrupt, rocky point, with trees which present a very wild, romantic appearance. I visited the island in a boat, and, in passing the point, I stopped to see a remarkable cave, of which a singular story is told. We found it opening upon the water, and so surrounded and overhung by precipices, as to be wholly inaccessible from any side by land. It is a very rough, natural excavation, about twelve feet high and twenty in depth, looking towards the north. Some years ago, when custom-house officers were appointed to watch for smugglers in that neighborhood, they traced a man, whom they had reason to suspect, over to that island. They were sure that he went thither in a boat, and followed, but could find no further trace of him. They spent about a week on the island, keeping a strict watch, but yet were unable to make any discoveries. At length they observed the cavern, in passing by the bluff, and entered it. There they found the man they had been seeking for, but dead, apparently from starvation. According to one account which we heard, he had been prevented from leaving his place of refuge by the waves, which were driven into the cavern by a violent north wind, which began to blow soon after his entrance; but the general opinion seemed to be that he was a man of such a resolute spirit that he preferred to remain in concealment, and to die of starvation, rather than expose himself to be captured by his pursuers.

T. D.

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ALWAYS IN A CRISIS.

The writer once met Judge Kane, the venerable father of Dr. Kane, of Arctic celebrity, in the news-room of the Athenæum in Philadelphia. We were all waiting for decisive news on some *topic (we forget what) of deep and universal interest*. The Judge remarked: "When I was a boy, the whole community was agitated on the great political questions which underlay the American Revolution. The news from the other side was looked for with intense eagerness. What will the English court and parliament do next? Will Chatham, Burke and Barre carry the day? or will the infatuated measures of Lord North be persisted in, and drive us into all the horrors and uncertainties of a bloody war? 'Well, well,' people would say, '*the next packet will decide the matter.*' And it has been *the next packet, the next packet*, from that day to this. The startling events and various fortunes of our own hard-fought revolution were concluded by 'the packet' which brought the news of the recognition of our independence. But the yet bloodier revolution of France, with the general shaking of the nations which attended it, speedily followed. Then the period of Napoleon, full of great and astonishing events, followed. His rise and decline, his downfall, his escape from Elba, his second downfall at Waterloo, his exile on St. Helena, his constantly apprehended escape, kept us on the *qui vive* for some twenty years. Our own second war with England, with a long train of stirring events before and after, followed. These made us look for *the next packet* sharply enough. And here we are looking for *the next packet* to this day!"

It is about thirty years since this conversation. One great drama after another has been enacted on the stage of history. The French Revolution of 1830, another French Revolution in 1848, accompanied (as French Revolutions always are) by others more or less complete and permanent, in Italy, Austria, Prussia and Hungary, and portentous subterranean rumblings in all the countries of Europe, the *coup de main* which transformed the "*Republique*" into an absolute monarchy, under Louis Napoleon, the Crimean war, the Indian mutiny, the vast and startling advances of science, have made the last thirty years quite as full of excitement and expectation as the half century reviewed by Judge Kane. "The next packet" has passed into *the next steamer—the next throb of the submarine telegraph*. Months occupied in the transmission of news, have dwindled to *weeks*, to *hours*, and will ere long dwindle to *minutes*, if that mysterious chord, whose pulsations have become so weak, shall, as we firmly believe it will, be rejoined or reinvigorated, and made again the vehicle of intelligible communication. But it matters not. Though the Atlantic be converted into a vast whispering-gallery, through which men and nations will tell back and forth the events which take place on either side the instant they occur, expectation will none the less be constantly on the stretch. *The next tick of the telegraph* will be awaited with just as much impatience as *the next packet* in the days of our fathers, or *the next caravan, the next chance vessel* or *stray traveler* in yet older and *slower* times. The world ever is and has been *in a crisis*, and ever will be, "to the last syllable of recorded time."

History has great problems to work out. Humanity has a great mission to accomplish. Events crowd upon each other with increased celerity and magnitude, as the catastrophe approaches. To mere curiosity, the changing phases of the world give only the pleasure of a momentary excitement; to thoughtful minds they afford subject of profound reflection; (for beyond all doubt, the events of our own time as well deserve the name of *history* as those which occurred a thousand years ago;) in those who look upon men and things in the light which Heaven has shed upon them, what thoughts, what hopes do they awaken. Anchored in the firm belief that "the Most High ruleth in the affairs of men," they look calmly on the troubled surface of society, assured that all events will terminate in the triumph of truth and right.

HE COMET—CONTRASTED.

Of old, the comets in their appearance brought terror to the human race. Ignorance and superstition combined in regarding them ominous of impending evil. They were portents of war, famine, pestilence, the anger of the Deity, and perchance the destruction of the globe. Their coming was uncalculated, their courses unknown. To some they appeared as vagrant meteors, wandering in space, and winning their trails of fiery splendor from contact with the machinery of the universe. To others they were no less than brands in the grasp of avenging angels, sent to scourge the world. To all they were a mystery, a wonder, and a terror. Woe! woe! cried the soothsayers, when they beheld these flaming heralds of anticipated doom, and the tribes and peoples of the earth vailed their eyes from the terrible brightness. Better borne were the eclipses, the mysterious hiding of the faces of the gods—than the comets, the fearfully visible tokens of Divine wrath.

But the human mind is no longer afflicted with these olden terrors. It has overcome the tremors of ignorance and superstition. Piercing the azure, it has measured and mapped the comets, solved the mystery of eclipses, and found and fathomed even sublimer evidences of Almighty wisdom and power. The comets no longer wander, lawless and terrible, nor come burthened with evil, to earth or man. Their courses are as immutably fixed as the stars—their shining as benign as the radiance of Hesperus. The splendid specimen which has for many nights been trailing its banner adown the western sky, has attracted the gaze of unterrified millions. It was, indeed, a magnificent presentment of Omnipotence—a glorious fraction of the insignia of that God, of whom the divinely inspired bard has sung—"The heavens declare His glory, and the firmament sheweth forth His handiwork."

PAY AS YOU GO.

This exhortation has become a proverb. It deserves the classification, for it is full of wisdom. But we fear it is not put in practice by many persons who acknowledge its importance in theory. The consequence is not only injustice and injury to those with whom they are brought into pecuniary relations, but to themselves also. Not unfrequently, the neglect of this maxim causes the seller to receive only "trust for pay," while it creates loose and extravagant habits in the buyer, and demoralizes his feelings. Then, what is asked and granted as a "favor," proves a "curse." We have known persons who had fallen into such a habit of making credit-bills, that they would have a shilling charged, if they had five dollars in their pockets, and in small change at that! Nay, so customary had this course become in a whole neighborhood, that it was considered a discredit, by young people of wealthy parentage particularly, to pay as they went! It was "too small a business," as the saying ran. Thus a large bill was made here, and a small one there, until everybody became involved in the labyrinths of credit, and were lucky, if they did not find themselves, sooner or later, in the meshes of the law! "Hard times," and "scarcity of money," were upon everybody's lips, whereas obedience to the "pay as you go" rule, would have enabled them all to get along without embarrassment, and made "both ends meet."

FELT BAD.

At a wedding which was recently celebrated in Michigan, the bride (according to what is said to be customary for brides to do on such occasions) wept and sobbed violently, and her mother and all the bride's-maids shed copious tears. Camphor and cambric were liberally applied, and the emotions of the ladies having been subdued, quiet was in a fair way of being restored, when, to the astonishment of every one present, the bridegroom "boo-hooed" right out, and went on crying at a rate which was truly appalling. It was a long time before he could master his emotion sufficiently to speak; but he at last "found his voice," and declared, in answer to the question, "What are you crying about?" that he was determined that his wife should not have all the weeping on her side, for *he felt as bad about the wedding as she did*. The burst of laughter which followed this announcement completely effaced the effects of all the previous exhibitions of grief.

BUSY-BODIES.

Many a man has made a fortune by "minding his own business," and many another has lost a fortune by attending to everybody's business but his own. And yet, though the terse phrase "mind your own business," is commonly called "the eleventh commandment," numbers persist in the ruinous practices of the busy-body. They will leave not only their business but their families, in neglect—yes, even in partial want—and go hunting about for "something to do" among their neighbors, something to advise about in the spirit of "busy-bodies," or to meddle with in the spirit of mischief-makers! Thus they render themselves perfect nuisances. Everybody dreads their approach. If a neighbor gets into any difficulty, they either turn "Job's comforter's," and thus increase the effect upon his feelings, or go about "pitying him from the bottom of their hearts," in the hearing of others, and thus increase the original difficulty many fold.

MR. COBB'S NEW STORY.

We this week commence the publication of a new story—ALARIC; OR, THE TYRANT'S VAULT—by Sylvanus Cobb, Jr. The first installment, which is given in this number of the LEDGER, speaks for itself. The story is *one* of the very best, if not *the* very best, which Mr. Cobb has ever written. The scene is laid in the old heroic times, and in a land famous in song and in story as the theater of the most thrilling events, of the wildest romance, of the bloodiest crimes, and the most terrible retributions. Out of these ample materials, Mr. Cobb, with a master's hand, has constructed a romance which we think will be perused with genuine enjoyment by our million readers, and that will add to his already unexampled popularity.

ALICE CARY.—Hereafter, this gifted lady will write for no paper but the LEDGER. Her popularity is so great among the firesides of America, that publishers of other weekly papers have occasionally been able to offer inducements sufficient to secure one of her sweet warbles for their columns; but from this time forth, the LEDGER will be the casket in which she will deposit her poetic gems. Let it be distinctly understood, therefore, that hereafter *she will write for no other paper*. We stated a week or two ago that we had engaged JOHN G. SAXE to write *exclusively* for the LEDGER; we now follow with this announcement of our new arrangement with Alice Cary; and as soon as certain matters we have under way shall be completed, we shall make an announcement which we think will occasion a greater sensation than any event which has ever occurred in the publishing business.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

A BREAKFAST REVERIE ON LEDGER DAY.

What *did* Adam and Eve do without newspapers? That's what I want to know. Nobody killed or married, no steamboat explosions, no railroad accidents. The beasts and beastesses all tame and well behaved; breakfast cooked to their taste, hanging ready on vine and bush; no clothes to mend; nothing to do but to make love all day long—not even the consolation of a cigar for Adam, or a bit of scandal for his rib. The serpent must have been a blessing; no wonder Eve dallied with him. "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," and heads, too. A newspaper would have saved her. In the first place, there would have been the excitement arising from her aggravating husband having the first reading of it, smoking all the while, so that she was obliged to pass it through quarantine before she could read all about "the frightful *lass* of life," as the pathetic newsboys have it. I wonder would she have considered it swerving from her conjugal allegiance not to agree with Adam in politics, or on the great stirring questions of the day, and if she would have waxed warm in the discussion of them, and pulled his whiskers. I wonder if he *had* whiskers. I thought of it the other Sunday "in meetin'," when the minister was reading about him. Of course I ought not, but I did; and I thought, too, how nice it must have been to be loved by the *first* man, before his heart was riddled through and through like a target, as men's hearts are now-a-days, before they are twenty. I am afraid, though, Adam grew tame and stupid, else Eve never would have flirted with the serpent; not that I consider that an excuse—I wouldn't have you think so. Oh, no. In fact, I don't know why I made that remark. I suppose it must have been a natural one, though, else it would not have suggested itself; not that I approve of everything natural, either—not at all—and I wish you would not keep catching me up so on everything I say, as if I need weigh every word before I put it down. If there is anything I hate, it is writing that way; I won't do it for anybody except Mr. Bonner, who has too much good sense to ask it—who gives me a wide pasture to prance in, because he is sure that I will not jump the fence, though the conservatives sometimes needlessly hold their breath for fear I will.

Well, it is a long jump from Adam and Eve to Mr. Bonner, and yet I can't help wishing they had been acquainted. I can't help thinking that if Adam had subscribed, like other good husbands, for the NEW YORK LEDGER, Eve never would have got into trouble. I'm convinced of it, and have long since ceased upbraiding her for that very reason. It was not her fault that Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., and Emerson Bennett were not born. The panthers and lions about her were all well enough, but they didn't show fight; there were no perilous adventures, no hair-breadth escapes, no storms, no "row" any how; she tired of dew and humming birds, just as I should. Now think what a blessing Bennett and Cobb would have been; think of the agonizing delight of leaving a heroine hanging by the eyelids, not to be extricated from her perilous position till the following Thursday, when *the next LEDGER should be "out," for they know too much* to leave their readers easy in their minds a whole week. Ah, you may sniff at them, you superfine fellows, who find it difficult to keep yourselves in cigars; but if they were not wanted they would not be run after, I can tell you that.

I should like to compute the lips which say every Thursday, "Ah, 'tis LEDGER day, is it not?" I never see that printing press flying round like mad in Fulton street, throwing the sheets to the four winds, that I don't feel like giving three cheers for Robert Bonner, whose heart is as big as his subscription list, and that's saying considerable, and who deserves, a hundred times told, every mill that his industry and energy have earned; and now, when he reads this, he may blush if he likes—I shan't.

FANNY FERN.

NEWSPAPER BORROWERS.

A "borrower" is an unfinished being. He is incomplete. There is a screw loose in his organization. He is a bad man—that is, an *unsafe* one. He never comes to anything good, and is always poor. It is an old Scandinavian proverb that when Satan wishes to angle with and finally catch a man, he first sets him borrowing. The whole tribe of borrowers are utterly mean, and the newspaper borrower is the meanest of the tribe. In this country newspapers are so cheap that every man *can*—and every decent man *does*—buy his own. At any rate, no decent man will *borrow* a newspaper. If he can't get one of his own, he will go without. It dirties, and rumples, and crumples a paper to handle it, and no man likes to have his favorite family journal soiled by borrowers' unclean hands. Subscribers to good papers like to preserve them in good condition; and in order that they may do this, the papers must be kept clean, and smooth, and whole. No one likes to preserve a dirty, torn or rumpled paper; and one such unsightly copy spoils a whole file—one number of a paper lost breaks up the continuity of a volume. And there is a degree of sentiment, too, about a favorite family paper like the LEDGER. A man acquires an affection for it, and, as in the case of his wife and baby, he don't want anybody else to meddle with it. Therefore the newspaper borrower is a disturber of the peace and happiness of families; he is a pest—a nuisance, and should be permanently disposed of in a manner that would forever prevent him from annoying honest, decent people who pay for their newspapers, and should be allowed to read and preserve them in peace.

FITNESS FOR OFFICE.

We have not meddled, nor shall we in any partisan sense, meddle with politics. It is a vocation with which we have small sympathy; yet there are some questions raised in relation to it, in which every citizen should feel an interest. One of these is, or ought to be, applied to every candidate for a post of public, political trust—is he fit, or qualified? There seems to be a pretty general impression, which is carefully cultivated by those interested, that the legal profession is peculiarly adapted to furnish fit political office-holders—that, in fact, only lawyers can make laws and execute them well. In the selection of office-holders we would not ignore any honest profession. We would look solely to the man, in relation to the public good, and if his morals were unimpeachable, we would ask Jefferson's questions—"Is he honest? Is he capable?"—and nothing more. We shall be glad to see the day, when it will be no longer inquired, of what party or profession is a candidate, but rather, "Is he fittest for the trust?" Then we shall have politics, honorable and clean enough for laity or clergy, and shall see office seeking the man, and not, as now, man unblushingly seeking the office. May we not hope for this state of things in a near-by "good time coming?"

LATE HOURS.

"Late" and "early" are relative terms, and therefore we cannot, within a certain limit, fix a uniformity of hours for social intercourse. But that, with the fullest allowance for individual circumstances that could reasonably be asked, the hours at which most of our social parties begin and end, involve an outrage upon the physical health, to say nothing of the moral, we think nobody will deny. What these are, in what are called "fashionable circles," may be inferred from the circumstance, stated to us by a lady friend, that on going, recently, to a mere "sociable," as it was misnamed, at nine o'clock, she had "the mortification of finding herself the first lady present!" When she would have been the *last* one may readily be guessed.

Look at our balls. We find the "ball," proper, opening about nine or ten o'clock, and closing at from three to four! Meanwhile, a hearty supper of all sorts of indigestible things, mixed together in the stomach made voracious by the fatigue of dancing, aided by exhaustion from loss of sleep, is partaken of—say at from twelve to one o'clock! Then the severe exercise of dancing, perhaps every set, and the still severer exercise of the waltz or the polka, is suffered to follow upon the engorgement of the stomach, without intermission! Only think of it! Could anything but evil come of such palpable violation of the laws of health? Did these assemblies begin at seven, and end at eleven o'clock, or twelve at the very latest, the "governor" of the household could go after the young folks, if not *with* them, with some expectation of being fit for business next day. Then many a business man, who is utterly deprived of all social enjoyment under the present pernicious system, could occasionally join in the social party, without difficulty.

Something near the programme commended above was attempted in this city last winter, by one or two families that we heard of. Let them persist in it; and let other heads of the thousands of families into which the LEDGER will carry our suggestions, follow suit! The result could not fail to be, everyway, not only beneficial to the health of body and mind—to say nothing of morals—but would add to the attractions and pleasures of social intercourse as well. It only needs a few courageous heads of families to inaugurate a reform of the evil under notice, so as to give us a new and infinitely more desirable state of things in the body social.

VIRTUE.

The practice of virtue, is not only the noblest human pursuit, but is the only one that never fails to reward the intelligent soul. It would seem incalculable, but for our knowledge of the blindness of human nature, how vice could find a votary among men, since virtue—which is the active seeking, or doing of good—is alone robed in supreme and unchanging beauty; and since all experience has shown that every path but virtue's leads, sooner or later, to disappointment, misery and ruin. Besides, virtue is of easier access and practice than vice, and not only rewards at once, but rewards forever. The conscience needs not to be trained before it can approve of her companionship. Where the right and the truth are, there she is—the inspiration of every noble thought, and the spur of every brave endeavor. Though shunned or neglected, she is not ashamed, and however assaulted, she cannot be vanquished.

When man has followed every other banner, and tasted every bitterness of soul, he returns to behold the ensign of virtue shining and triumphant, and all her adherents laden with imperishable spoils. He who binds her insignia on his breast, and gives his heart and his hand to her service, is superior to poverty and misfortune, and can smile back the scorn of the foolish and the proud. His alone are the ever pleasing reflections of a mind undegraded, a life without stain. He alone can feel assured, however fortune may frown or friends prove false, that his character is envied by the dissolute, and his conduct approved by the good. If his memory survives among men, it will be honored; if it is to perish, this cannot rob him of the present consolation of a whole life-time of joyous recollection. Pure and golden are his reminiscences—hopeful and beautiful the promise of his future. No crime can be set to his account, no wrong nor wretchedness has he wrought in the world. Richer than Crœsus in life, he will have when earthly pomps and riches fail, a treasure that can bribe death to vail his terrors and illumine the darkness of the grave.

LEADERSHIP.

With all the boasted advantages of our era, individuality is a lamentably rare thing. Everybody, almost, seems to look to somebody else for his cue, and his standard of right and wrong, as it provided by nature with no faculties of his own. The great majority of people literally exhibit "no will of their own." They follow some leader, taking what he says for truth, and acting accordingly. Thus they become virtually his man-worshiping slaves. If he happen to be a good man, and so a safe guide, it is well; but if he prove a bad man, they are in a worse condition than even those mentioned in the good book as following blind guides into the ditches. Being too indolent to think for themselves, they allow somebody else to think for them. He becomes, virtually, their leader. And so the world has become filled with leaders, great and small. Each has his followers, his worshipers, his very vassals, and so the social and political curse of leadership goes on! But yet we are not without hope of an ultimate reform of this evil. Our main dependence is in the press, and cheap, yet salutary literature, such as that with which we are endeavoring to serve the million. And now, in order to make our endeavors all the more useful, we beg of our readers to cultivate mental independence, aye, independence of even the leadership of the LEDGER, safe as we believe its influence to be.

THE BIGGEST FEET.

A shoe manufacturer in Lynn, Mass., recently made to order two pairs of shoes, for an overseer on a Southern plantation, which might well be classed with that remarkable shoe celebrated by Mother Goose as affording a domicile for an elderly lady with such a numerous progeny that "she didn't know what to do." The foot of said overseer is reported to be "*nineteen and a half inches in length, and broad in proportion.*" The tread of that man must be fearful to insects and destructive to vegetation. The tramp of Attila's famous war steed whose master boasted that "grass ne'er should grow where he once trod," must have been a small affair when compared with the elephantine tread of the owner of feet nineteen and a half inches long and broad in proportion. His brogans are among shoes what the "Leviathan" is among water-craft. It would have to be the biggest kind of a scrape, in which that overseer could "put his foot."

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

WHO stands the best chance of contemporaneous approbation? He whose mediocrity of progress distances not his comrades, and whose equality of merit affords a level on which friendship may be built; who is not so dull but that he has something to teach, and not so wise as to have nothing to learn; who is not so far before his companions as to be unperceived, nor so far behind them as to be unregarded.

GRIEFS are like the beings that endure them—the little ones are the most clamorous and noisy; those of older growth and greater magnitude are generally tranquil, and sometimes silent. Our minds are like ill-hung vehicles; when they have little to carry they raise a prodigious clatter—when heavily laden, they neither creak nor rumble.

HAPPINESS is a blessing often missed by those who run after pleasure, and generally found by those who suffer pleasure to run after them. Like a will-o'-the-wisp, it is often farthest off when we imagine we can grasp it, and nearest to us when it seems at a distance. The surest way to secure it to ourselves is to confer it upon others.

AN editor in a neighboring city took a policeman to task for want of vigilance. "The ungrateful hound!" exclaimed the policeman; "if I had been vigilant, he would have been in jail for drunkenness, instead of being allowed to write his complaint against me at home."

A FRIEND of ours, who has been hesitating whether to keep a matrimonial engagement, informs us that he has at last bespoken his wedding suit. He evidently, on the whole, prefers a suit for the fulfillment of his promise to a suit for breach of it.

SOMEHOW we suspect that the nature, whose pumps are always manned for a good cry, keeps its feelings pretty near the surface, and that you need not go very deep in the left breast before you come to rock.

A NEW YORK paper, speaking of the steamer Leviathan, exclaims, "what if she were to go to the bottom of the ocean!" No doubt she and all on board of her would be in a *great pickle*.

"I AM very much troubled, madam, with cold feet and hands." "I should suppose, sir, that a young gentleman, who has had so many *mittens* given him by the ladies, might at least keep his *hands* warm!"

THOSE, whom a great man has marred, rejoice at his ruin, and those whom he has benefitted look on with indifference; for, with common men, the destruction of a creditor is considered equivalent to the payment of the debt.

A YOUNG lady of New Orleans, who recently performed a remarkable feat in rowing, has been presented with a beautiful yawl. A *smack* would have been more appropriate.

YESTERDAY we heard an old fisherman upon the banks of the river complain that the boys had stolen his minnows. We suppose the little rascals hooked the bait to bait their hooks.

WITH four metallic qualifications, a man may be pretty sure of worldly success—they are gold in his pocket, silver in his tongue, brass in his face, and iron in his heart.

LEAVE your grievances, as Bonaparte did his letters, unopened for three weeks, and it is astonishing how few of them, at the end of that time, will require answering.

THE world cannot well spare its true poets. When one of them dies, there is a note out of the time—we feel that a part of earth's music is hushed.

YOU may wish to get a wife without a failing, but what if the lady, after you find her, happens to be in want of a husband of the same character!

A KENTUCKY editor says, "on our *outside* will be found some fine suggestions for raising peaches." We suppose that on his *inside* may be found the peaches themselves.

MANY a woman who continually abuses her husband won't let anybody else do it. She thinks it such a luxury that she must needs monopolize it.

WHAT we call patriotism is often a blind and mischievous prejudice against other nations rather than an enlightened preference of our own.

SOME judges commit a great many crimes, yet rarely seldom diversify the employment by committing criminals.

"I HAVE branded you, sir," said one individual fiercely to another. "You rather seem to have *brandied* yourself."

TRUE friendship is like sound health; its value is seldom known until it is lost.

SOME writers, in a vain attempt to be cutting and dry, give us only what is cut and dried.

"PRAY, sir, is that a horse-pistol you have in your hand?" "No, sir, it is only a Colt's."

A STITCH in time saves nine. So, if you feel one in your side, be thankful.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A MAN named Mulligan, living in Ritchie county, Va., on waking one night not long since, discovered that there was a snake in his bed. He attempted to despatch it, but the reptile escaped, and in crossing the bed of Mr. M.'s little son, who was sleeping on the floor, the serpent, which proved to be a rattlesnake, struck its fangs into the little fellow's leg, and he died in twenty-four hours afterwards, after suffering the most excruciating agonies.

A BANGOR (Me.) paper says that the prisoners in jail in that place are very refined, and select in their society. A new-comer, who was recently thrust upon them by a minister of justice, being too vulgar for their fastidious tastes, they clubbed together and paid his fine, that he might be set at liberty and their select circle be thus relieved from the contamination of his presence.

A SHORT time since two brothers, residing in South Carolina, a short distance from each other, were afflicted with a cancer, which appeared in both brothers at the same time, and in the same eye of each. A few days since, one of the brothers fell dead on the floor of his room, and, on the following Monday, the other died in the same manner.

A LETTER writer in Calcutta says the community there have been thrown into much excitement by a Hindoo juggler, who actually cuts off a man's head and puts it on again, so that the victim comes out just as good as new. Medical men have watched the juggler to the best of their ability, but cannot discover the secret of the trick.

THERE is a boy in Richmond county, Va., seven years of age, who weighs ninety pounds, is forty-four inches high, and measures twenty-five and a half inches around the breast, thirty-seven and a half inches around the waist, fifteen inches around the arm, and eighteen inches around the leg. A promising boy, that.

IT is said that one of the results of the recent inroad upon the Chinese will be the appearance upon London and Parisian bills of fare, of various dishes of which rats, dogs, and other creatures not heretofore turned to dietetic account by enlightened nations, will be distinguished ingredients.

A NORTH CAROLINA paper states that eighty women in every hundred in that State are "snuff-dippers." The process of "snuff-dipping" consists in rubbing the teeth and gums with snuff, thereby causing, on account of the irritation of the nerves, a sensation like that of intoxication.

A WILD Indian, who was lately hung in Texas for killing a child, said he should go to Arkansas as soon as his spirit left his body, and requested another Indian to be sure and send his gun along as soon as possible, as he should want it on arriving in that State.

KIT CARSON, the celebrated mountaineer and Indian fighter, not long since, being hard up for provisions, experimented on a grizzly bear stew, which he pronounces, in a California paper, to be the most detestable dish he ever tasted, with the single exception of buzzard pie.

MRS. GORE, the well-known English authoress, has nearly lost her sight, the blindness having been superinduced by her anxiety for the safety of a beloved son, who has been serving with great distinction in the British army in India.

JEROME FLANDREAU, who lived near Natchez, Miss., being out hunting lately, got his ramrod fastened in his gun, and while attempting to pull it out, the weapon was discharged, and the ramroad and the charge of shot passed through his breast, inflicting a mortal wound.

MRS. LUDWICK SNYDER died recently in Burnside township, Penn., at the age of one hundred and eight years. Her husband, who is one hundred and twelve years old, survives her. They were the oldest *couple*, so far as is known, in the world.

A MAN living in Cecil county, Maryland, has this year sold thirty thousand dollars' worth of peaches alone from his farm, besides other fruits. That is better than going off to any gold diggings.

THE BOUNTEOUS GIVER.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"He giveth food to all flesh."—THE PSALMIST

God giveth to the helpless babe
A mother's nurturing care,
And still the man, in strength unbow'd,
The warrior stern, and monarch proud,
To Him for food repair.

The camel, on the desert sands,
The ox, to pastures led,
The lion, roaming o'er the wold,
The lamb, that strayeth from the fold,
Are by His bounty fed.

The wandering denizens of air,
The raven's clamorous brood,
The eagle, high in eyried bower,
The moping owl, in ruin'd tower,
From Him receive their food.

The whale, that like an island spreads,
Amid the seething main,
And all the nameless tribes that keep
Their secret chambers in the deep,
Seek not to Him in vain.

The insects on their gauzy wing,
The ephemeron, in its lot,
The beetle, on its droning course,
The cricket, with its chirpings hoarse,
Are not by Him forgot.

Yea, even the groveling reptile-race
That crawl from hidden lair,
In Nature's ample storehouse find
Some sustenance for them design'd
By His unslumbering care.

Throughout this wide and teeming earth,
In mountain, vale or grove,
Thro' ocean-depths, mid forest shade,
He feedeth all His hand hath made,
With boundless power, and love.

RICHARD HOFFMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER XCVI.

THE MEETING OF THE TWINS.

Some persons picture winter like old age—dull and cheerless; to others it is the season for sport and every manly enjoyment. It has, at least, one pleasure peculiar to itself, being the period of the year peculiarly set apart for the interchange of friendship, the re-union of long-severed families and friends, rejoicing to meet once more around the patriarchal board on that auspicious day, when peace on earth and good-will to men was first proclaimed by angel tongues to the astonished shepherds on the mountain top.

The night, although intensely cold, proved a lovely one, and the chaise which conveyed the party towards Meldown rattled merrily along the crisp and level road. The fields and gently undulating hills, no longer clad in summer's verdure, or the more sober foliage of autumn, but in the silver livery of winter, appeared like a landscape carved in ivory, as they lay glittering in the light of the moon, which, like a lamp suspended in the heavens, shone brightly to light the impatient travelers on their way.

Jack Manders and Caleb, who occupied the rumble of the vehicle, enjoyed the journey exceedingly. It was home, and though neither of them could recall many happy days spent in England, the word had still a spell even for them.

"Do you know anything of the part of the country we are about to visit?" inquired Caleb of his companion.

"Not much," was the reply; "but I have a relative who resides there, a sort of uncle."

"Lucky fellow," said the sailor; "no doubt you are impatient to see him."

Jack admitted that he did feel *rather impatient*.

"I can imagine the pleasure of such a meeting."

"Can you!" exclaimed his friend, with a bitter laugh. "All I can say is, that your imagination must be exceedingly strong, then; for Andrew Silex would sooner see the murrain amongst his cattle, or a bailiff on the farm, than the face of his nephew."

"What!" exclaimed Caleb, "the old rascal who trepanned you on board the Caradoc? Whew! I understand you now. Of course, you intend to thank him."

"*Most affectionately*," muttered the former. "But haven't you friends in England?"

"A mother," answered the young man with a sigh, "and I dare not go near her yet."

"Why so?"

"I am not of age; when I am——"

"You intend to square accounts with your precious father-in-law," added Jack, finishing the sentence for him. "All right, I can understand that. I, too, have certain family matters to settle. Suppose we assist each other."

The proposal was agreed to, and further explanations might have been entered into between the speakers, but for a circumstance which made a considerable impression upon the mind of one of them. Just as the chaise entered the common close to St. Faith's, a heavy-looking dog-cart, with two men in it, emerged from one of the by-roads. It was drawn by a powerful black horse, and both the occupants were muffled up to the eyes. But that might have been to guard against the cold. There was nothing in their appearance to indicate that the precaution was intended as a disguise.

On catching sight of the chaise the driver of the dog-cart suddenly pulled up, as if uncertain which road to take; his hesitation, however, lasted but an instant, for on his companion exclaiming, "Take the left, can't yer?" he gave his horse the rein, and started at a rapid pace across the common.

It might have been that their route lay in that direction, but it was equally probable that they had changed it to avoid being recognized.

"What a powerful horse," observed Caleb.

His fellow-traveler took no notice of the remark; he was leaning over the side of the rumble, attentively considering the appearance of the two men, the voice of the one who gave the direction "to take the left," had evidently struck him.

"How very odd," added the speaker.

"What is odd?" demanded Jack, in the tone of a person whose reflections have been suddenly broken in upon.

"That they should have quitted the high road at our approach," answered his friend. "I wonder if they will take to it again, now that we have passed them."

"No doubt of it."

The supposition proved a correct one; for the two vehicles had not crossed each other more than a couple of hundred yards before the dog-cart was seen driving along the usual track.

Caleb repeated his observation that it seemed very odd.

These circumstances, from whatever source, evidently made a great impression upon the mind of his friend, who, during the rest of the journey, appeared buried in his reflections.

It was near midnight when the chaise drew up at the little inn at St. Faith's. The landlord, who had long since retired to rest, had to be roused up, to receive the unexpected guests. A fire was speedily lit; and whilst our hero, the lieutenant, and Harry Morton stood over the crackling faggots, enjoying the blaze, Jack Manders proceeded to the stables to have a little private conversation with the ostler.

Caleb went with him.

At first the man, not over delighted, perhaps, at having been disturbed from his sleep by the arrival of travelers at such an unwonted hour, did not seem inclined to be very communicative, till the sight of a crown piece unlocked his tongue; then he could not be too communicative.

With a tact that might have done credit to an Old Bailey lawyer, Jack Manders proceeded to cross-examine him.

His first question was, "How far is the Home Farm from the village of St. Faith's?"

"About three miles."

"Who lives there?"

"The old steward, Andrew Silex."

"Is he much liked in the county?"

To this inquiry the ostler appeared embarrassed how to reply, not knowing whether the speaker might be a friend or not of Andrew's. Of course he had no wish to offend a gentleman who paid for information so liberally.

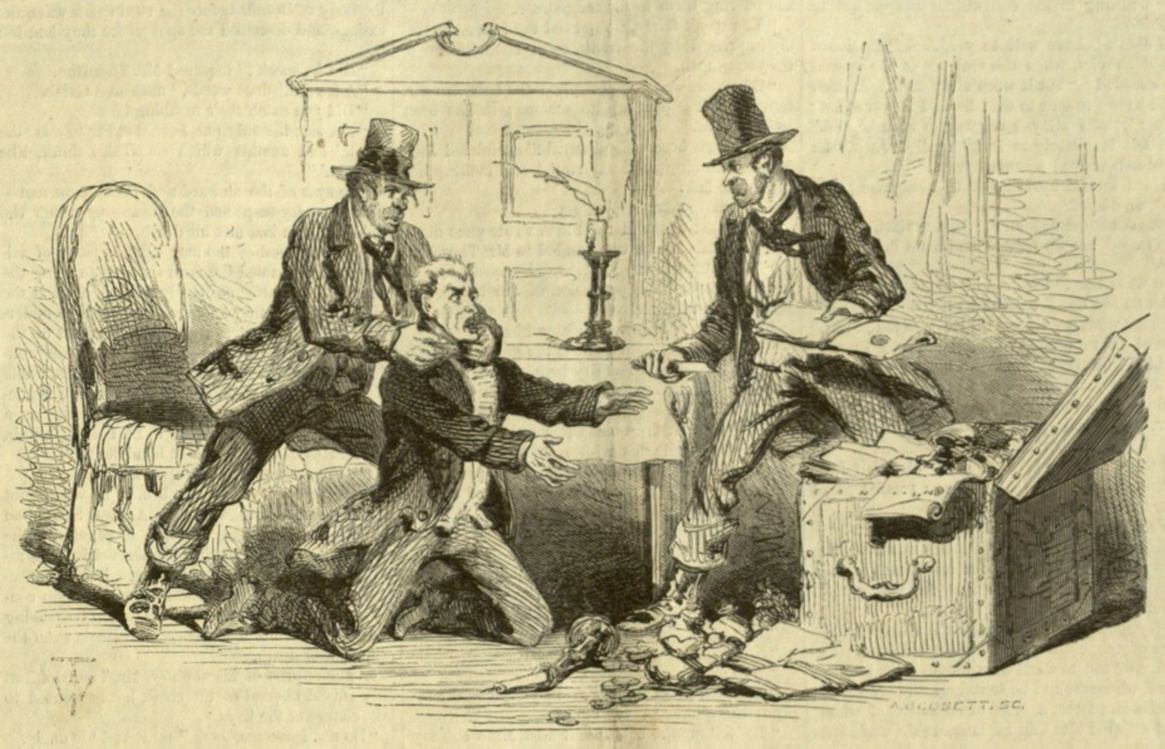
"Some like him," he answered, "and some don't; for my part, I know nothing bad of him—that is to say, very bad."

"Or good, I should say," observed Caleb, amused at the hesitation of the speaker.

"Well, not much," said the man. "Mr. Silex, like the rest of us, can't please every one; but he is in high favor with my lady."

"No doubt of that," thought Jack, remembering the scene he had witnessed in the park when Lillian was transferred from the care of Rose and her husband to that of Andrew.

"But he is rich," added the ostler, in a tone of confidence; a piece of information he thought that could not do any great harm either way.



THE TWIN BROTHERS FACE TO FACE.

"And does much good with his money?"

"I dare say he does, but I never heard on it."

"Has he many visitors?"

"None," said the man, "since his brother, who wor like him as one pea to another, staid wi' un."

"Is that long since?"

"More than a year last Michaelmas. The whole family, housekeeper and all, wor nearly poisoned."

"By accident?"

"No; by mushrooms."

Jack smiled. He could have made a shrewd guess at the nature of the accident the man spoke of.

"And now, my good fellow," he said, "before I propose to you to guide us to the Home Farm, for which service of course I am willing to pay you handsomely, for the hour is late, answer me one question more, and I have done."

"Ees, sir."

"Are you acquainted with any one in the neighborhood who drives a dog-cart with a powerful black horse?"

The ostler considered for a few minutes; then shook his head. Evidently he was at fault.

"Not in this neighborhood," he said. "Tims, of Exeter, has just such a trap, which he sometimes lets."

"And who is Tims?"

"A horse-dealer, who was in trouble about five years since, concerning a hunter of Sir Norman's; but it turned out to be all right."

"Suppose," said the nephew of Andrew Silex, "that I were on the common just where the three roads meet."

"Near the old sign-post?" demanded his informant.

"The same."

"I know exactly the spot."

"Which would be my road to the Home Farm?"

"There be two roads, the one the chaise came by, through the village, is the nearest."

"And the other?"

"Goes round by the lane, between the Elms, Squire Thornton's place, and the pits; but it be a long way round."

"Thee bees a mortal curious chap," thought the speaker, as Jack Manders called his companion aside, and held a brief conversation with him, which, for the benefit of our readers, we shall repeat.

"You recollect the dog-cart and the men?" he asked.

Caleb nodded in the affirmative.

"I cannot explain, even to myself, the effect their appearance, and above all, the voice of the one who spoke produced on me—it was my uncle."

"The steward?"

"No; Mike, his brother, the man who would have trained me in the same school of crime in which he himself was an adept. It is impossible I should be mistaken."

"Say improbable," observed his friend; "remember, we had been speaking of him just before."

"Silenced, but not convinced," replied Jack. "Should my suspicions prove correct, he can be in this neighborhood with no good design. Besides, he is an important witness in proving the claims of Miss Lillian."

"What do you propose?"

"To proceed to the Home Farm and watch."

"Hence with you," exclaimed Caleb; "I would rather run the risk of going a dozen times upon a fool's errand than miss one occasion of rendering a service to my benefactor."

On being promised a second recompense for acting as their guide, the ostler readily consented to accompany them, and the three started at once, from the stables, on their way. The simple villager could not avoid wondering what business travelers, who posted with four horses, could possibly have at such an hour with Andrew Silex.

It is now time to follow the two travelers in the dog-cart, who had shown so marked a desire to avoid observation by turning off the high road the instant they encountered the party in the post-chaise, and by that very act, as well as the sound of the voice of the one who spoke, excited the curiosity of Jack Manders.

For some time they continued to drive rapidly and in silence, the tread of the powerful horse and rolling of the light wheels of the vehicle being scarcely heard upon the snow, which, like a thick carpet, covered the earth, and it was not till they reached the entrance to the narrow by-lane skirting Mr. Thornton's park of the Elms, that either of them uttered a word.

"Vell, which is the vay now?" demanded the man who held the reins in a thick, surly tone.

His companion pointed to the turning he should take.

"And how far is the crib?" added the speaker.

"About two miles."

"Long uns?"

"Pretty vell, for that," was the reply.

"Vy didn't yer say three, at once," observed the first speaker, who was evidently in no very amiable humor; perhaps the meeting with the chaise, or the coldness of the night, or the effect of both combined, had ruffled it. "But it's like yer," he continued; "yer never could give a pal a straight-forrards answer. It's my opinion yer were born with a throat twisted like a corkscrew. The truth, when yer does speak it—which ain't often—gets twisted into a lie afore it can wriggle itself out."

"And it's my opinion," retorted the person to whom this not very complimentary observation had been addressed, "that you aint no heart for the business we are on. Better say so at once, and not beat about the bush, and nag, nag, nag till I am tired o' hearin' on yer. I can get to 'Meriky without it."

"No, yer can't."

"Why not?"

"You forgets the reward for your apprehension," answered the driver of the dog-cart. "Fifty pounds; it's more than yer worth."

"There is exactly the same sum for those who assisted me," quietly observed his companion.

By the above conversation, our readers have doubtless discovered that the suspicions of Jack Manders with respect to one of the parties were correct, the speaker being no other than Mike and his companion, his old pal, Fiddler Dick. We need scarcely add that the crib the latter person had inquired the distance to was the Home Farm.

Immediately after the escape of the old convict from Chatham dockyard, he proceeded, with his two friends, at once to London, as affording the best chance for concealment, and took a quiet lodging in a remote part of the town, far from his previous haunts and associates. Here they agreed to remain for some time, in order to repose themselves for a while, and mature their plans for the future, an arrangement which suited the mountebank and the warder Brandt exceedingly well, seeing that the expense was borne by Mike, and that it gave the former time for his *air* to grow again. Like Sampson, he felt he was not half himself shorn of the hirsute honors of his head.

Although Fiddler Dick had always shown a peculiar pride in his *air*, it was not vanity alone that in the present instance prompted him to watch, with all but parental fondness, the reappearance of two tender little sprouting corkscrew curls, which formerly dangled in well *iled* luxuriance, one by the side of each ear; prudence had something to do with it, for the Chatham, like the Brixton crop, is so well known to the police, that an experienced officer can tell by a glance at which of the establishments a gentleman's hair had last been cut.

It was cautiously and by slow degrees that the two worthies proceeded to unfold their project to Brandt. Not that they gave him credit for entertaining many scruples—like their own, his conscience was a convenient one—but at present he had given no proof that it would stretch to burglary, or, possibly, to a still darker crime.

When fairly informed of their purpose, the ex-gaoler's only anxiety appeared to regard the chances of success and probable amount of plunder; satisfied on these points, he made no further objection, but at once consented to assist in the scheme of robbing the Home Farm.

He had preceded them in their journey to St. Faith's only a day before, in order to ascertain whether the steward was absent from his home or not, and to make such inquiries and observations as might prove useful to their project.

On reaching the croft, an extensive field between the farm and the common, Mike touched the arm of his companion—a signal for him to pull up.

"Is this the place?" growled Fiddler Dick.

The old convict pointed to the house, which was plainly to be seen in the moonlight.

"And where is Brandt?" asked the speaker.

"Oh! he can't be far off," was the reply.

Mike gave a sharp, peculiar whistle—something resembling the cry of a bird, and the next instant their confederate made his appearance from the other side of the hedge.

"All right?" inquired the mountebank.

"The steward is at the farm, and I have sawn through the bars of the shutters, as you directed," replied the ex-goaler; "but I am not all right; my teeth are chattering with the frost; and I dared not venture a second time into the village—the hobnails questioned me enough this morning when I arrived there."

"It is cold," said Mike, complacently. "A drop of this will warm you."

The speaker handed him his pocket flask, which was half filled with spirits. Brandt eagerly drank off the contents.

"Why, you have drained it all!" exclaimed the ruffian, with a chuckle.

"And little enough, too," answered the man. "I wish you had been watching and shivering behind that infernal hedge as long as I have, that's all."

"Well, well," observed Fiddler Dick, in an ironical tone, "it will soon be over now; take the rug out of the cart, and wrap yourself up in it whilst I and Mike crack the crib."

"You won't be long—I feel plaguy sleepy," muttered Brandt.

Instead of appearing angry at the speaker's expressing an inclination to sleep at such a time, his confederates seemed highly amused at the idea; and, after securing the horse to one of the branches of a stunted pollard growing near, advanced cautiously towards the house, Mike being acquainted with the place, leading the way.

The abode of Andrew Silex was one of those old-fashioned residences, half mansion, half farm, which were so common in England, and which may still be found in remote nooks and corners of the country.

It had been intended originally, we believe, as a residence for the dowager ladies Boothroyd, but if so, a century at least must have elapsed since it had been occupied by any one of them, for the building had been permitted to fall into decay, and a wing, (the foundation might still be traced on the north side, now the principal entrance,) pulled down.

On the south was the large bay window, belonging to the oak-room, the sanctum of the old steward, his chamber being directly over it. The ones occupied by the housekeeper and farm servants were situated on the opposite side of the house.

Mike was perfectly aware of his brother's habit of passing the greater portion of the night in the oak-room, to watch over his treasures, and had taken his measures accordingly.

Like most sullen and revengeful natures, he anticipated with delight the moment when he should have his respectable and affectionate twin completely in his power, and repay him for the years of misery he had endured at the hulks.

The debt, if not morally, was at least partially a just one; and the old convict was the very person to exact it to the last stiver.

For several days Andrew Silex had been in a state of pleasing excitement; he and Lady Boothroyd had come to an understanding at last; the codicil to his first master's will, by which, in the event of Sir Norman's death without male heirs, the property was to be equally divided between his female issue, and that of Allan Boothroyd was to be given up, and the price of its concealment paid.

To be sure the sum he had agreed to accept was not near so large as the one he had once calculated upon, but then he was getting old, and could not afford to wait any longer; besides, he had no Lillian to produce. Mike had checkmated him in that game; and he considered that, under all the circumstances, he had made the best of the affair. As he had arranged to start the following morning for London, Andrew retired earlier perhaps than usual to the oak-room, in order to look over his papers, and take additional precautions for the security of his badly earned wealth.

Had not his attention been absorbed in the contemplation of his treasure, as he knelt over the chest which we had occasion to describe in a former chapter, the old miser might have noticed how the candles upon the table flared in their sockets; but he saw nothing but his gold, felt nothing but the glittering pieces as he counted them. No wonder that the current of air from the half-open shutter escaped his observation, especially as it was somewhat broken by the heavy moreen curtain drawn before the window.

"Only to think," he muttered, as he drew from a packet of parchments the codicil to his first master's will, "that this scrap of paper should be worth fifteen thousand pounds!"

Little did the wretched man imagine that other ears drank in his words.

"With this," added Andrew, still speaking, as he thought, to himself, "I could blight the memory of the dead, blast the reputation of the living, and—well! well!—money is better than revenge; and, after all, fifteen thousand pounds is not to be despised."

There were two listeners behind the curtain who thought so too.

"And after all," continued the old man, falling into a cynical vein, "what can I do with this? I must die one day or another, and can't take it with me; there is the drawback—the bitterness of being rich. We toil that others may spend,—sin that others may enjoy the fruit of our crime."

"Think of your relations, Andrew!" exclaimed a well-known voice, in a chuckling tone.

The steward started to his feet; but before he could call for assistance, or utter a single cry, an iron grasp fastened round his throat, and he was forced upon his knees again.

Whilst engaged with the contents of the chest, the two ruffians had crept from their place of concealment and secured him.

"Take the knife," whispered Fiddler Dick to his companion, "it is in my left-hand pocket; it won't do for me to let go my hold."

"*Not yet*," answered Mike, who had been quietly barring the door; "there is no hurry, is there? Andrew, we must have a little brotherly conversation first; I have not thanked yer yet for the year's board and residence ye wor good enough to provide me. To be sure, government paid the bill; but yer kindness wor none the less."

Andrew Silex uttered a half-stifled groan, and there was an expression of agony in his dull gray eyes which amused his affectionate twin exceedingly.

"Stash it," muttered the mountebank.

"*Not yet*," repeated his confederate; "let him taste it, as I have done."

Mike walked to the still open chest, and began filling his pockets with gold and notes, till his brother, mad and desperate at being plundered thus before his eyes, made violent efforts to release himself.

"Take it quietly," said his tormentor, "I was obliged to do so. How much did yer say this dokerment was worth? Fifteen thousand pounds? Too much money, Andrew, to have been honestly come by."

"The knife, I say!" exclaimed Fiddler Dick, whose patience began to give way. "Are you mad?"

"Yer shall have it in a minute," replied his companion in crime; "can't yer let a pal have a little quiet enjoyment. I'd ha' done more nor that for you, Andrew," he added, chinking a handful of gold in the face of the unhappy man. "How is *mushrooms?*"

Andrew uttered a second groan, much fainter than the first; his breath was fast failing him, beneath the pressure of the mountebank's fingers, which encircled his neck like a collar of iron.

"And the worthy housekeeper wot cooks 'em so well," added Mike; "she'll be rayther surprised in the mornin', I'm thinkin'."

Here Fiddler Dick declared with an oath that he would hold the steward no longer. Mike heard him with regret; for, like the tiger, he felt a savage pleasure in prolonging the torments of his victim. As his confederate was not a person to be trifled with, he consented, although with reluctance, to abridge his enjoyment, and thrusting his hand into the mountebank's left-hand pocket, drew forth the knife.

A film came over the sight of Andrew Silex as he saw his brother deliberately open it.

CHAPTER XCVII.

WIPING OUT OLD GRUDGES.

On quitting the village inn, Jack Manders and his friend Caleb followed the footsteps of their guide till they reached the narrow by-lane running between Minter's farm and the old bell-ringer's cottage. This bridle-road, for it was little more, the same Mark Rayner escaped by on the night of Lillian's abduction, soon brought them to the wall of Meldown park, which they left to the right, and struck into the open common near the gravel pits.

A mile further brought them to the croft, from which they first caught sight of the Home Farm, its quaint old gables and bay windows clearly defined in the moonlight which flooded the landscape with its silver beams.

"There it be," said the ostler, pointing to the house.

The attention of Jack, however, was directed to a nearer object—the dog-cart drawn up close by the old pollard.

Neither the driver nor his companion was in it.

They approached it cautiously, and looked carefully around them; neither of the men was to be seen.

"I told you you were mistaken," observed Caleb.

"Perhaps," replied his friend, doubtfully, for the words he had heard had made a deep impression on him; Mike's tone of voice was not easily forgotten. "We shall see," he added; "doubtless they are at the farm."

The speakers were about to turn, when a deep groan from the opposite side of the hedge startled them. The young men sprang over, and saw what appeared to be a human being, enveloped in a coarse rug, twisting and rolling on the ground in intense agony. Their first impulse was to raise him, but the wretched man proved too far gone to speak; he could only mutter a few indistinct words, which, Caleb thought, sounded like "the drink—poison!" when he fell back a dead weight in their arms.

Their guide suggested that they should give him brandy.

"Too late," said Jack, who had seen death face to face too frequently to be mistaken. "He is gone."

"What—dead!" exclaimed the ostler, in a tone of terror and surprise. "Why, it be murder, then?"

"Little doubt of that," observed the former; "and he who perpetrated it is not likely to leave his night's work uncompleted. Let us hasten to the farm at once, if we would prevent a second crime."

Having placed the body of Brandt upon the ground, and covered it over with the rug, the two friends, horrified at the discovery they had made, started at a rapid pace towards the house.

"This way!" shouted their guide, pointing to the north side of the building; "the porch be here."

Jack Manders followed the direction of the speaker; but the quick eye of Caleb had caught the reflection of the light which streamed through the chink of the half-open shutter; and he directed his steps towards that. To tear it open, dash aside the curtain, and spring into the oak room were the acts of an instant.

Fortunately, he was armed.

The sight that met his gaze might have startled the nerves of one accustomed even to the battle-field, for there the pomp and circumstance of war—the trumpet's clang, the cannon's roar, and the cheers of the excited soldiery, drown the keen cry

of agony, and rob e'en death itself of half its terrors. Caleb had witnessed such scenes, but never felt the blood rush from his heart as it did on his first glance into that lonely chamber, where Fiddler Dick, who had forced the half-strangled steward upon his knees, was holding back his head by the thin, gray locks, whilst Mike was in the act of drawing a knife across the victim's throat.

With a shout of terror and execration, the young sailor leveled his pistol and fired. The ball struck the aged fratricide in the back; the knife fell from his palsied hand, and a yell of disappointment escaped him.

The mountebank, whose coolness and presence of mind rarely deserted him, saw at a glance that the intruder had no second weapon. It was hard, very hard, to be disappointed of his plunder, and such plunder, too; but personal safety now became the first consideration.

Releasing his hold of the half-murdered man, he darted towards the window with the agility of a wild cat; but Caleb, whose eye was quite as quick, intercepted him, and a brief but desperate struggle ensued.

"Release me!" muttered the ruffian, between his clenched teeth.

His antagonist made no reply, but clung to him with desperate determination. It was a death grapple to one if not both of them.

Twice they fell upon the floor of the chamber. The last time the sailor struck his temple against the heavy oaken table. The blow caused the lights to dance wildly before his eyes, and the pale, ghastly features of his assailant wore a mocking smile.

Caleb's strength was deserting him.

"If I could only find the knife," thought Fiddler Dick, releasing one of his hands from the neck of the young man, and feeling along the floor in search of it.

By this time voices were heard at the porch, and the noise of descending feet upon the stairs. The farm servants had been roused by the shouts of the ostler and Jack Manders.

The mountebank felt that an instant's more delay might consign him to a far worse doom than the dockyard of Chatham. Cursing his ill luck, he started to his feet, and stared for an instant round the room.

Andrew Silex, although severely wounded, for the blood gushed fearfully from his throat, had contrived to crawl towards the chest which contained his treasured gold, and during the struggle, instead of attempting to assist his preserver, had been making desperate efforts to close the lid, which fastened with a spring.

As the assassin stretched forth his arm to secure at least a portion of its contents, the old man succeeded in the attempt, and sank exhausted beside the chest.

A low chuckling laugh broke from his lips.

A curse issued from those of Fiddler Dick, as he glared with the fury of a tiger disappointed of its prey, around him; and probably he would have completed the work of death his confederate had commenced, had not the noise made by those breaking open the door of the apartment warned him to provide for his safety. Seizing the parchment which Mike had left upon the table, he sprang through the open window and disappeared.

When Jack Manders, the ostler, and farm servants succeeded in forcing an entrance, they found their worst fears realized. The steward lay weltering in his blood; his brother dying, and Caleb bewildered and half stunned from the blow he had received, incapable of explaining the scene that had taken place.

Jack's first care was to assist his friend.

"Speak to me! are you wounded?" he exclaimed; "for heaven's sake speak to me! This is indeed a night of terror."

"It be murder, I think," observed the ostler, pointing to the ghastly form of Andrew Silex, whom the servants had raised from the floor and placed in a chair.

"Measter beant dead," said one of the men, "but he do bleed awful."

"What has occurred?" demanded the housekeeper, who now entered the room, with her usual self-collected, quiet air.

At the sight of the partner of her crime she paused for an instant, and gazed upon him; but no glance of pity shot from her cold, gray eyes; on the contrary, they appeared to express satisfaction rather than commiseration.

"I thought it would be so," she calmly added; "the gold he lived for has been the means of his punishment. But where is the murderer?"

Caleb, who by this time had partially recovered, pointed to the window, and with some difficulty pronounced the word "There."

Jack understood him, and tore aside the curtain just in time to see Fiddler Dick, who had reached the dog-cart, spring into the seat, and drive off at a furious pace across the common.

"Escaped!" he said, in a tone of disappointment.

"One on 'em," observed the ostler; "but here be another."

Mike, who, during the struggle between his confederate and the young sailor, had succeeded in crawling under the heavy oaken table, was now dragged forth, and by no gentle hands. At every movement the wretched fratricide groaned with anguish; the torture he endured must have been exquisite.

"Why this be measter's brother!" exclaimed one of the servants, and his fellow laborers, not knowing what to make of the affair, began to look doubtfully upon the two strangers. The ostler being well known, they had no suspicion of him.

"Till the result of the night's crime is known," observed the housekeeper, "I will take charge of these."

As she spoke she disengaged the keys, though not without some violence, from the grasp of Andrew Silex.

"Pardon me," replied Jack Manders, snatching them from her, "I am the fittest person."

"You!" replied the woman.

"At your service, madam."

"And by what right?"

"Simply as his nephew. Oh! you need not look surprised," added the young man. "I am not in the least proud of the relationship."

At the word "nephew," Mike—who had been placed in a chair directly opposite the one filled by his brother, who was still insensible, although those around him had succeeded in stopping the hemorrhage—uttered a deep groan, and pronounced the name of "Jack."

"Here I am, uncle," replied his relative. "I told you we should meet again. You see I have kept my word."

"Yes, curse you!" muttered the old convict.

"Would I had found you a better man."

"You don't know all," exclaimed Mike, with momentary strength. "I came to the Home Farm, and Andrew and that woman who hanged her own husband through jealousy tried to p'ison me."

"Horrible!" ejaculated Jack; "but I warned you not to trust him."

"That aint the wust," continued the dying man. "Seeing he couldn't send me out of the world by p'ison, he did it as bad—managed it another way: got my ticket-of-leave recalled—sent me to the hulks."

"His own brother!" exclaimed Caleb.

"Ay, his twin—and we wor reckoned uncommonly like each other; but he wor the cunningest of the two, for he allays got the—the——"

Here a succession of violent spasms cut short the speech of the fratricide, and the upper portion of his body writhed like that of a twisted snake with agony, whilst the lower extremities remained perfectly still.

At this allusion to his resemblance to his brother, a shudder ran through the veins of his hearers, for never, perhaps, was the likeness more apparent than at that moment, as they sat, each supported in an arm chair, one insensible and the other writhing in the convulsions of approaching dissolution.

"I didn't behave well to yer, Jack," continued the old convict, when the violence of the spasms had subsided; "but it worn't my fault. Andrew would have yer sent to sea: he said it wor safest; and yer know I allays gave way to what he said."

"I felt it bitterly at first," replied Jack, "for the captain proved a brutal tyrant."

"Hard lines," interrupted the old man; "no doubt, no doubt."

"But it turned out for the best at last. Providence raised me up friends, and I am in England again."

"In what line?" inquired his uncle, faintly.

"An honest one," replied his nephew.

"That's what we all say till we gets found out," muttered his relative. "In the police, I s'pose," he added, bitterly; "vell, vell," he continued, after a pause, and in a more philosophical tone, "bizziness is bizziness; but yer might ha' fired higher, Jack, and put me out of my mis'ry at once. Ugh! my back is broken—broken!"

"It was not I who fired the shot," observed Jack Manders; "and, badly as you have treated me, I rejoice that it was not."

"Worn't it?" exclaimed Mike; "who then?"

Caleb acknowledged that the act was his. The old convict regarded him for an instant with a glance of such deadly hate that the young man shuddered and turned aside.

Assistance now arrived from the village in the person of the constable and Doctor Phrase; the first care of the medical man was to attend to the steward, whose wound he sewed up, and then turned to his murderer, a brief examination of whose wound satisfied him that all human skill was hopeless.

"I knows it," groaned Mike; "I knows it."

At the sound of his voice, Andrew Silex, who, by this time had recovered his consciousness, looked up and regarded the speaker fixedly—there was something horrible in the glances they exchanged.

"Sad affair," exclaimed the doctor, "sad affair. How did it occur? Who is the guilty wretch?"

Andrew slowly raised his hand and pointed to the murderer, who was seated opposite him.

"What, your—no, no, impossible! Why, you are brothers."

"Twins," added Mike, "and uncommon like one another."

The steward attempted to speak, but Phrase positively forbid the effort, declaring that the only chance of saving him depended on his maintaining absolute silence.

At the words "chance of saving him," an expression of disappointment overshadowed the ghastly features of the assassin. The iron must have entered his soul deeply, for not even the sight of his victim's sufferings could appease the burning sense of injury and resentment.

Jack Manders turned aside with a feeling of disgust. He felt at that moment almost grateful to Andrew for the act of treachery which had removed him from the influence of so bad a man.

The steward made signs that he wished to write and a slate and pencil were brought him. With a trembling hand he traced a few lines and handed them to Phrase, who read them aloud—

"Do all you can to save my brother."

"Does not that move you?" demanded the nephew, addressing himself to the old convict; "his heart is less hard than yours—he sets you the example of forgiveness."

A low chuckle escaped from Mike.

"And is anxious that you should recover——"

"*That he may hang me,*" replied the former. "I know him—you don't."

The glance of hate and fury which lit, for an instant, the dull, gray eyes of the steward, proved that the speaker had read his motives more truly than Jack Manders had done.

Andrew wrote again—"Where are my keys?"

"That fellow who calls himself your nephew has taken them," replied the housekeeper, impatiently.

"They were safer in my possession than in yours," replied the young man, "but I have no wish to retain them. I came to the Home Farm to exact an account for the treatment I have received; Providence made my visit the means of detecting, if not preventing, a fearful crime. My uncle has only to say to whom he wishes me to resign them—I am quite ready to give them up."

"Very proper, very proper indeed," said Dr. Phrase; "hem! as my respectability is, I should say, undoubted, you cannot do better than give them to me."

The steward shook his head, and wrote hastily again. The speaker would have taken the slate from his hand, and read his wishes as he had previously done, but the wounded man would resign it to no one but Jack. The words were—

"Keep them."

Both housekeeper and doctor looked exceedingly disappointed, as the nephew quietly dropped the keys into his pocket.

Before morning dawned, both Mr. Thornton—the former in his magisterial capacity—our hero, and the two friends who had remained with him at the village inn, arrived at the Home Farm, whilst a number of villagers crowded round the house.

Among the latter were Farmer Minter and poor old Simon Gee.

As the death of at least one of the parties appeared imminent, Mr. Thornton at once proceeded to take the depositions, and the first person examined was Jack Manders.

The witness stated that, having passed two men in a dog-cart, whose appearance excited his suspicion, on his way to St. Faith's, where he arrived only a few hours previous to the murder, he had started from the inn, accompanied by his friend and the ostler; that his friend had obtained entrance to the oak room by means of the open shutters, whilst he and his guide alarmed the servants, who slept at the north side of the building; he knew no more.

Whilst his nephew was giving his evidence, the steward watched him closely, listening to every word with intense interest.

"You did not actually see the crime committed?" observed the magistrate.

"No, sir."

"Are you related to Mr. Andrew Silex?"

The question had been prompted by the housekeeper.

"I believe that I am his nephew, sir," answered Jack; "but I am by no means anxious to claim the relationship."

"Why not?"

The witness remained silent.

"Then why keep possession of my patient's keys?" demanded Doctor Phrase, in a tone which indicated anything but a friendly feeling towards the speaker.

"To prevent his being robbed."

Something like a chuckle broke from the lips of the steward; Mr. Thornton smiled.

"But I have no objection to place them in the hands of this gentleman," continued the speaker, at the same time drawing them from his pocket and offering them to the magistrate.

"You speak fairly," observed the latter, favorably impressed by the frank, open countenance of the young man.

"Of course he does," replied the housekeeper, bitterly; "it is part of the scheme; it has been well planned."

"What has been well planned?" exclaimed Jack Manders, turning suddenly round, and looking her full in the face.

The woman remained silent.

The master of the Home Farm wrote once more upon the slate, which was handed to Mr. Thornton.

"The witness is my nephew. I request him to keep the keys, hold possession of the house, and remain here till I recover."

"Till when?" inquired Doctor Phrase.

"Till he recovers," repeated the gentleman.

The physician gave a dry hem, which augured anything but favorably for the recovery of Mr. Silex.

Seeing that Andrew was sufficiently strong and collected to write his wishes, as well as express them collectedly, the magistrate next proceeded to examine him, his replies, as a matter of course, being written, and read aloud as he wrote it.

"From whom did you receive your wound?"

"My brother Mike."

All who heard this shuddered.

"All right," said the convict; "we are twins, and used to be reckoned——"

"Was he alone?"

"No."

"Who else?"

All waited with intense curiosity to hear the reply to this question.

"The fellow who held me whilst Mike cut my throat."

"Do you know the man?"

"No; he is not here. The young fellow in the sailor's dress came in at the window and saved me."

Every one present looked upon the old convict with undisguised feelings of horror. Although Mike had never shown any great susceptibility on the score of the opinion his fellow-creatures entertained of him, he appeared to feel it on the present occasion; he knew that he was dying unpitied, despised, abhorred, and the sense of desolation stung him.

"But yer don't know why I did it," said he, with an energy that startled them. "We are brothers, twins, and reckoned uncommon like—no matter for that now; he wor rich, and I poor; but it worn't for that, it wor all about the girl Lilly that led to it."

At the allusion to the heroine of the tale, both Mr. Thornton and the lieutenant became greatly interested.

"Will any one give me a mouthful of brandy?" said the dying man. "I should like to say out my say."

Jack Manders brought him a glass. Mike eagerly drank it off, and it served to revive his failing strength.

"I aint a-goin' to say anythink about you, Jack," he continued, looking him in the face; "it wasn't your hand as fired the shot, curse it. Vel, Andrew finds me out in my crib in London, where I was livin' respectably a'ter my misfortunes, and wanted me to take a gal and bring up for him. I consented, and did the best I could for her."

"Was her name Lillian?" inquired the magistrate.

"Lillian or Lilly, it's all the same," replied the convict. "He said that she would one day prove worth her weight in gold to him; and yet he only gave me a beggarly fifty pounds a year for her."

"And what became of her?"

"A lady as brought her—I wish I had never seen her face—told me she was a chance child; but I found out that was a lie. She promised me five hundred pounds in the event of her death, and——"

"You murdered her!" exclaimed Mr. Thornton, horror-struck at the dark scene of crime which began to be unraveled.

"No, I did not. I swopped her with Fiddler Dick *for a gal as was a dyin'*, poor little Fan."

A shudder ran through the frame of the speaker as he pronounced the name of the dancing-girl; it might have been his wound that caused him pain, or the recollection of his victim's death-bed.

"Vel, Fan died, and was buried under the name of Lilly. Lady Boothroyd paid the money. So, being low like, for Jack had left me to go to sea, I came down here. Andrew and that woman tried to p'ison me with a dish of *mushrooms;* that proved no go, so what does he do but gets her ladyship to ask some lord, I think they said he was a minister—a pretty minister!—to call in my ticket-of-leave, and I got sent to the hulks for the rest of my life. Do you wonder that it riled me—that when I escaped I came to *thank* him at the Home Farm? There," he said, gasping for breath, "now yer knows all about it. I aint sorry," he added slowly, "that I wor interrupted afore the job wor done; for, after all, we are twins—aint we, Andrew?"

"My dear sir," whispered Lieutenant Marsh, "this man's confession is most important; may I request that it be committed to writing?"

The request was complied with, and the last act of Mike's ill-spent life was to sign it.

Great was the excitement among the villagers who thronged around the house when the nature of his confession had transpired, for all remembered the pretty child who had so unaccountably disappeared from amongst them. Simon Gee could not restrain his feelings, but forced his way through the crowd to the oak-room.

No sooner did they hear his name than our hero and the lieutenant shook him warmly by the hand.

"My young friend here will inform you of much that you will be pleased to learn," observed the latter. "I must quit you. Should Mr. Bently hear of your arrival," he added, in a whisper to Richard, "or meet you unprepared, I tremble for the consequences."

Leaving his fellow-travelers at the Home Farm, the worthy man directed his steps towards Meldown Park.

Mr. Thornton directed the body of the fratricide to be removed from the oak-room to one of the out houses, in order to await the inquest of the coroner on the following day.

"Unfortunately, sir," observed Jack Manders, "there will be two."

The magistrate looked surprised, imagining that the speaker alluded to the steward, who, although badly wounded, was not yet dead, and might possibly, he thought, recover, despite the ominous shake of the doctor's head. Andrew Silex took the words of his nephew in a similar light, and regarded him with a look of angry impatience.

"That there be, squire," exclaimed the ostler, who began to feel himself rather an important personage, in consequence of the share he had taken in the adventures of the night. "There be another on 'em," he added, "the one we found in the croft."

"A corse?"

"Ee's, squire, a *dead un!*" replied the rustic, with a shudder.

Jack and his friend at once related their finding the body of Brandt before the vital spark was quite extinct, and described the spot where they had left it.

"Did he speak?" inquired Mr. Thornton.

"A few indistinct words," answered Caleb.

"Did you catch their meaning?"

"No, sir; the only one I could swear to was 'the drink,' and another which sounded, I think, like 'poison.'"

The eyes of the steward and his nephew met—they shrewdly suspected the means by which the unhappy man had met his death.

At the request of the magistrate, a party of villagers accompanied the farm servants to bring the body in; the latter positively refused, even at the bidding of one they so much respected, to undertake the task alone, so greatly the events of the night had terrified them—a feeling not to be wondered at, for, with the exception of the memorable New Year's-eve, when Barny Gee and the gamekeeper met their deaths, such a circumstance as a murder had not taken place at St. Faith's within the recollection of the oldest inhabitant.

Dr. Phrase now insisted upon his surviving patient being conveyed to his bed, or he would not answer for the consequences. Andrew Silex, had he possessed the strength, would have resisted the order. It was like tearing his heart-strings to remove him from his gold. His eyes, like his affections, were riveted upon the receptacle which contained his treasure; and the thought of its passing to another gave him a keener pang than even the approach of death.

At the request of his nephew, Mr. Thornton not only affixed his seal to the chest, but consented to take charge of the keys.

"Do not leave me, Jack," muttered his uncle.

"Not another word," interrupted the village practitioner, "I must insist. It is absolutely self-murder, to——"

"Come with me," repeated the dying man, heedless of the caution. "I won't—I dare not be left alone."

"A clergyman would be a far more fitting person," observed the young man, seriously. "I am ignorant, uncle, very ignorant, and cannot speak the words you ought to hear."

"I am rich, Jack; rich and childless," exclaimed the steward.

"I do not require your gold," replied his nephew; "were you to offer it to me I would not accept it. You forget," he added, lowering his voice to a whisper which only the old man heard, "that I know the means by which you obtained it. There is a curse upon it; crime sticks to every coin."

Andrew Silex uttered a groan of mingled rage and disappointment. It was something to which the experience of his long life was opposed, which he could not comprehend, to find the poor boy who had been trained to a career of sin—who had vainly implored his assistance, rejecting the wealth for which he had steeped his own soul in guilt.

"You do not know the sum," he murmured; and the words came hissing, like the arch-tempter's proffer, between his close-set teeth.

"Were it ten times greater it would not change me, uncle," was the unhesitating answer. "God has been merciful to you, more merciful than to your wretched brother. He has given you a few hours to repent. Use them wisely, and dispose of the contents of yonder chest for uses that may in some degree atone the means by which you obtained them; for I repeat it, not a coin shall ever stain my hand.

"It is an honest one now," he added, in a tone of self-respect; "the past has been effaced."

And he was right; if the words were proudly, they were truthfully spoken. No human being can be considered morally responsible for his actions until good and evil are both placed before him—and for years the poor neglected boy had known nought but evil, seen nought but evil, heard nought but evil; the world had been against him, and, like the untaught savage, he had preyed upon the world. No parent's voice had told him there was such a thing as honesty, the social compact, the law of man's existence—he had never heard a prayer, till that hallowed one, fraught with divinest wisdom, fell upon his ear, uttered by Lillian in her solitary chamber.

There was something more than accident, perchance, in the words which first arrested his attention, "Lead us not into temptation."

Daily and hourly all have need to repeat them.

As the plant rooted in some dark and noisome den puts forth its shoots towards the solitary ray of light which penetrates its drear abode, so the heart of Jack had turned instinctively to good as soon as it perceived it; clung to it through shame and suffering, till the work of reformation became complete.

After such a triumph, he might truly say, "The past has been effaced."

The words "mercy" and "repentance," from any other lips, in all probability would have produced but little effect on the cynical nature of Andrew Silex; but, coming from one who had been doomed in infancy to a career of vice, and yet redeemed himself, and coupled with the rejection of his gold, they startled the long-slumbering conscience of the dying man, whose head sank heavily upon his breast.

"Very improper; in fact, I must say, highly improper," exclaimed Dr. Phrase, "to agitate my respected patient at such a crisis. Remove him gently," he added, turning to the servants, "mind, very gently, at once."

"Jack," said our hero, placing his hand upon the shoulder of his humble friend, "think better of it; stay with him. I don't mean for his money; no, I admire and respect you for that, but he has not long to live, and, by all accounts, has much to repent of; a few words may touch his heart."

"What can I say?" answered the young man, modestly; "you forget how ignorant I am, a clergyman is the fitting person to——"

"*Was Lillian so very learned?*" interrupted Richard with a smile.

The allusion was sufficient, Jack Manders wrung his hand, and, without a word, followed the servants as they carried his wretched uncle from the room.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A PERSON being asked why he had given his daughter in marriage to a man with whom he was at enmity, answered—"I did it out of pure revenge."

CATCHING SEALS.

BY AN OLD "SALT."

"I first went to sea as a cabin boy," said Captain Storer, "and my father took me in his vessel on a sealing voyage round Cape Horn. The most frightful place I ever saw was a cave in the rocks close on the shore, among the places which we visited for seals. You must know that there are two kinds of seals—the hair seals and fur seals—which have coats entirely different from each other. Then the hair seals are called by several different names, according to their sex and ages. The clapmatches are old males, and furious creatures they are, too, sometimes. You must have seen stuffed hair seals in the museum, or at least pictures of them. You know they have no feet or legs—nothing but flippers, so that they look as if it would be impossible for one of them to get along at all on shore. But I can tell you I have seen them go at a good rate over the sandy beaches and along the land, especially when they were frightened.

"I never shall forget the first time I went to kill seals," on the shore. They leave the sea in the night, at particular seasons of the year, and go up on the land, and then return early in the morning. We landed on a beach sometime before dinner, and took our stations, along in a line, a good distance from the water, ready to kill them on their way back to the sea. We had brought hand-spikes, boarding-pikes, axes, and other things that might be convenient, and I expected nothing but an easy and a very pleasant kind of hunting-party. We waited for some time without seeing anything; but by-and-by they began to come down from the land, and there was soon plenty of work for us all. A handspike is enough for a common young seal, but when you come athwart an old clapmatch, you may find an ax is not too much of a weapon, if enough. Most of those we saw appeared to be helpless, and made no attempt to defend themselves, but hurried down towards the shore as fast as they could. But they were so slow that it was easy to knock them on the head, and that was enough for them. But the old ones were very different. When they saw any of us coming, they would raise their heads and look very spiteful, and struggle hard to reach us, and appeared not to be at all afraid of us. One of our stoutest men determined to stop one big clapmatch from getting into the sea, and got an ax, and struck at him. But somehow or other the old fellow caught the blow on one of his flippers, in such a manner that the ax flew out of the man's hand, and up into the air, and turned over and over till it fell on the beach some way off, and before anything more could be done, the creature scrambled down and got off. Another man struck a large seal with a boat-hook, and could not stop him; and, being determined not to give him up, jumped on his back, and stuck the point of the boat-hook into him, and held on by it. The seal kept on his course, and the sailor had a ride down towards the water's edge, when one of his shipmates came up and struck the animal a fair blow on his head with a handspike.

"The killing of the seals is a kind of sport not always very pleasant; but the sailors liked it much better than the skinning of them and curing the skins, which takes much time, and, in hot or rainy weather, is most disagreeable work.

"My father," said the captain, "told me to get into the boat with him one day, and we rowed along by the shore till we came to a cave, where he said he had heard the noises of seals, and believed there was a considerable number of them. As we approached, we found there was a ledge of rocks rising high up the side of a hill, very broken and craggy, at the bottom of which opened a narrow cave, so low and crooked that we could see nothing within on account of the darkness. But such a noise came from it that I felt terrified, and would not have been willing to enter if I had had any way of avoiding it. The sea flowed freely into the opening, and my father steered the boat right in. The light faded fast as we entered, and in a moment it was so dark that I could see nothing distinctly. It was plain, however, that there were seals there, and in the greatest abundance, for I saw their dark shapes all around us, many of them on the sides of the cavern, which were formed of craggy rocks, some in the water, and, in short, wherever I looked. And almost all of them were old ones, showing their great white tushes, with their big, white eyes staring at us. And such a howling as they kept up! I was glad enough when my father said it was too dark to do anything at that time of day, and that we must come again when the light was stronger, and we had better weapons, and when he gave the word to 'back water and get out of the black hole,' I felt happy enough, and made a resolution that I would not be one of the next party to *the Clapmatches' Cave.*"

WILD ANIMALS IN CONNECTICUT.

My attention was first attracted to the subject by accidentally noticing some of the smallest living objects around me. I killed a field-mouse, one day, by a stroke of my scythe, while mowing; and, during our resting time, at noon, which commenced a few moments after, I observed several insects already beginning to feed upon his body. While I was standing by, a bug came buzzing through the air; and soon afterwards another, from a different quarter. In a short time several other insects came up—some through the air, some on foot—and began at once to seize upon the little carcass, at which they worked till night, as diligently as I did at my mowing, and apparently with much more pleasure.

How did these beetles, bugs, and other voracious insects, get their information of the dead mouse? I had read of vultures, coming from a great hight in the air, to pounce upon a lion which had been killed, in the wilds of Africa, and had heard different opinions expressed of such birds being guided to their prey by smell and by sight. But I had now a new subject of inquiry, which occupied me with many conjectures, and led me to make many observations and inquiries, with a number of various experiments. And these gradually extended to all branches of the animal kingdom. The mussels in the brooks, with the pearls which they often contain, (probably in all parts of our country,) I may place at the bottom of the list of animals which I observed; and all the way between these and the bald eagles were the water snakes, the eels, the suckers, the woodchucks, the wild pigeons, and some others. I found to my surprise that water snakes and eels often travel by land, where they would not be expected to go. The former, going by night, are hardly ever seen on their journeys; and the latter, moving under ground, can scarcely ever be discovered, unless by accident. I caught great and frightful water snakes on their passage from one piece of water to another, in either of which they were hardly known to exist. Eels I dug from the ground, several feet below the surface, near the top of a high hill, whither they had worked their way up, through moist but solid land, on the course of a small underground rill, the head of a brook in the valley, from which, doubtless, the animals had come. T. D.

CHARLIE.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

——"A mortal shape endued
With love and life and light and deity,
And motion that may change but cannot die;
An image of some bright Eternity;
A shadow of some golden dream." SHELLEY.

I know the angels have blue eyes—
Or I'd not love them as I do—
Ay, by the azure of their skies
And by my dreams, their eyes are blue;
And sure the lips and brows of Heaven,
Charlie, are molded like thine own,
And to its voices there is given
The melting music of *thy* tone.
And so the angels are like thee—
Or thus they ever seem to me.

If this light verse should meet thine eye,
Do not mistake its meaning, boy.
'Tis true that, as in hours gone by,
Thou art a loveliness and joy;
And thou wert more than this, I know—
But, Charlie, 'twas two years ago!

* * * * * *

Sometimes adown the twilight Past,
'Mid mists and shadows hushed and dim,
I see thee, as I saw thee last,
Listing the autumn-wind's wild hymn,
As though thy pensive spirit heard
Prophetic voices in its sighing,
And gazing where one lonesome bird
Far through the cold, gray clouds was flying.

How blue and fathomless thine eyes
Watched that air-wand'rer's silent flight—
As if thy soul, like it, would rise
And lose itself away in light!
Though without wave or curl, thy hair
Fell golden, carelessly and low;
The gentlest grace was in thine air;
Thy brow was blue-veined and like snow
And sweetest dimples nestled in
The pure, pale cheek and rounded chin.
In sooth, thou wert the brightest one
Mine eyes had ever looked upon—
And thus I will remember thee,
Thou *vision-like* Reality!

* * * * * *

In that old wood where oft I've seen
Thee, in thy hunter-costume, rove,
And gazed upon thee till I ween
My *admiration* seemed like love;
In that old wood, upon *that* tree
Thy name I've written o'er and o'er—
But there, since then, ah me—ah me!
I might have written—*many more!*

* * * * * *

If o'er I loved thee it was well—
But then I do not love thee now;
Thy *beauty* haunts me like a spell,
But only as a dream art *thou.*
A dream, a loveliness, a joy,
Thou art, and will be, brightest boy.
And thou wert more than this, I know—
But, Charlie, 'twas two years ago!

THE LOST TREASURE;

OR,

THE CHAMPION OF CASTILE.

A TALE OF SPAIN IN THE OLDEN TIME.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1858, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XX.

CONCLUSION.

"There was once a king," commenced Alfonso, "who had two sons. He was a stern, unyielding man, ruling both his family and the state with a rod of iron. He was proud of his station, and to this pride all other things had to bow. The oldest son, who had arrived at the age of twenty years, and who was already a knight, and had fought against the Moors, was one day in the country where he met a damsel as fair as the full moon, as bright as the sun at noonday, and as mild as the evening zephyr. She was as lovely as the rose in full bloom, as modest as the violet, and as comely in form as the free gazelle. The prince saw her, and he loved her; and when he knew that the damsel returned his love he asked her to be his wife. He said he was a poor knight, without fortune, but honest and true. She consented to his wishes, and an old priest made them man and wife. Her parents were satisfied so long as their daughter was happy, and they seemed to love their son-in-law well.

"For some time things went on favorably. The prince found opportunity to spend one or two days in the week with his wife, and he learned to love her more and more at every interview. He always found her awaiting him, and the joyous beams that gleamed upon her beautiful features told plainly how she loved in return. Those joys were as pure as the breath of heaven, and no thought of evil was with them. But clouds were coming. One day the king's other son, who was eight years younger than his brother, happened to be out riding with some of his tutors, and he passed the cot where the fair wife lived, and there he saw the elder prince seated by the side of his love. He went home and told his father what he had seen; and when the first-born came the king asked him what manner of female he kept hidden away in the wood. The prince was confounded at first, but finally he said that it was only a pretty girl with whom he had sometimes whiled away a few leisure moments while out hunting.

"But the king was not so easily deceived, and he employed spies to watch the movements of his son, and in this work the younger brother gave his assistance. Nearly a year had passed away, and the young wife gave birth to a child. It was a boy, as fair and beautiful as the morning star. The king heard of it through his spies, and his son was at once summoned to appear before him; but the prince happened very fortunately to learn of the royal command before it was officially conveyed to him, and with all haste he posted off to the country and found his wife; and then, for the first time he told her who he was. She was startled, but she found no word of blame to speak.

"'My father knows that you have a child,' the prince said, 'for he has had spies about us, and even my young brother has helped watch me. I have not seen him yet since the knowledge came to his ear, but I must see him soon. Should he know that you were the wife of his oldest son—the wife of the rightful heir to the throne he now fills, he would be sure to have our child put to death, and your own life would be in danger. I know him well, and I know he would do it. And now, my own love, are you willing, for my sake, to suffer reproach? Are you willing to swear you are not my wife—that you have only been my mistress? And are you willing to send your child away at once, and swear it died? Do this and all may yet be well. We will have our own little one cared for—we will be true to each other—and the time may not be far distant when all shall be bright again—when I can claim you before the world as my wife.'

"The faithful creature hesitated not a moment, but, with her arms about her husband's neck, and her face hidden in her bosom, she promised to do all he might ask. Her love was all powerful, and her confidence in his faith was unbounded. She said she would break the news to her parents, and have them secrete the child at once.

"When the prince returned to the palace he received the order to visit his father. 'How is this?' demanded the king, very sternly. 'I hear you have a wife and a child?' 'Not so, sire,' the son returned. 'Pardon me for my wildness, but the girl captivated me. I am sorry I have brought shame upon her, but she may outlive it, for the child is dead.' The king cared nothing for the girl's shame. If she was not the wife of his son, and if the child was dead, he was content; but he wanted proof of that. So that very day he rode out to make inquiries for himself. He found the fair girl and her parents, and he questioned them sharply; but they were true to the prince. The poor girl confessed her shame, and the parents asked that the wicked seducer might be made to pay them for the sufferings he had caused them. The child had been carried away to the house of an old woman who lived deep in the forest, and they swore it was dead. The king returned satisfied for the time, but he was not done watching for further developments.

"Another year passed, and during that time the prince saw but little of his wife. He was watched narrowly, and he knew it would not be safe to visit her often. Yet his royal father began to suspect that he had been deceived. Spies had told him that they believed the child of the prince still lived, and that its father and mother sometimes visited it. The prince was fortunate enough to hear of this in season, and the next movement was more fortunate still. The king sent for him and gave him a mission to Arragon, intending, while he was gone, to search for the child. But the prince was ahead of his father there. He set out upon his mission, accompanied by four knights in whose faith he could repose the fullest confidence, and when half a day upon his journey he turned out of his way and visited his wife. He told her of the new danger that threatened them, and that he must take the child away. When he had explained all, the young mother consented to the arrangement. For the sake of saving her boy's life she would sacrifice much. So the prince took the child with him into Arragon, and there he found a worthy knight whose life he had once saved in battle with the Moors at Alcaraz. This knight consented to take the child and rear him up to manhood if necessary. He promised to find a cot somewhere among the mountains, and there devote all his time and attention to the bodily and mental training of his charge.

"The king made his search, but he found nothing, and after a while he let the matter rest, though there were those who had their eyes open to every movement. Time passed on, and ever an anon the prince received accounts from the knight of Arragon of the progress of the child; but he dared not visit there, nor would he allow the mother to do it, for he knew that sharp eyes were upon them. The parents of the prince's wife both died, and she went to live with a distant relative.

"Twenty years had passed from the time of the flight of the prince with his child, when the old king died, and his oldest son was crowned in his place. The first movement of the new monarch was to bring forth his long-loved, faithful wife, and have her seated by his side. Some men murmured at this, and some were glad; but the king cared little for the opinions of others. He had grown from a young man to one of middle age, and his wife had grown older with him; but she was still beautiful, still loving, still the same sweet being as of old. The joy of the reunited pair was great, but not unalloyed. They wanted to see their boy. Thus far they had overcome their yearnings for the sake of their child's safety, but they thought the danger past, and they sent for him. Their messengers went to the cot where he had been reared, but they found it locked, and in a neighboring town they learned that the old knight was dead, and that the young knight had gone towards the capital. Here was a source of fear and trouble. The boy knew not his parentage, for he had been reared in total ignorance of his origin—and he might wander off and never be found by those who were so anxious to embrace and claim him."

At this point Alfonso ceased speaking, and a bright drop was seen to roll down his cheek. His lip had been trembling for some moments, and he was deeply agitated. Not a sound broke upon the stillness of the place, and all breaths seemed hushed. When the king gazed up again his glance fell upon Sir Enrique. He arose from his seat with a convulsive movement, and approached the spot where the youthful champion stood.

"Enrique! My Son!" burst spasmodically from his lips, and on the next moment the brave young knight was clasped to his bosom.

"Oh, God! So long separated, but now restored!" the king cried, while the tears trickled down his face. "My noble boy, let this hour, with the weight of love it brings thee——"

Alfonso stopped, for the heavy arras behind the throne had been moved aside, and a new-comer appeared in the chamber. It was Theresa—the queen.

"SHE ALIVE!" gasped Nunez, starting half up from his seat, and then sinking back again.

"Aye, my brother," the king returned, bending a glance of mingled pity and scorn upon the prince. "Her own child slew your hired assassins, and saved his mother's life when he knew her not."

Nunez tried to speak, but he could not. A fearful spasm shook his frame, and as he sank farther back into his seat his gaze became fixed, with a sort of vacant, icy stare, upon his royal brother. But Alfonso's attention was called another way.

"Theresa," he said, taking his wife by the hand, "let me say to thee what I was about to say to another when you entered: Let this hour, with the love and joy it brings upon its bright wings, be a balm for all the woes and sorrows of the past. And now——"

But again the monarch was interrupted, for the queen, who had seen, and known, and loved her child before, broke from his grasp and sank, sobbing and weeping, upon the bosom of her noble boy. And Enrique, who had recognized in Theresa of Castile none other than the Floda whom he had saved and entertained, and whom he had already learned to love, even when he knew her not, murmured.—

"MY MOTHER!"

The sweetest words of earth that ever passed from human lips—and oh! how sweet to him who spoke them then. The doubts, the fears, and the anxieties of years were all gone, and he could call, with the full assurance of love, and of hope ended in fruition, the sacred names of FATHER—MOTHER!

"Is it not a joy sufficient for all the past?" murmured the king, as his wife turned her tear-wet face fowards him.

"Yes—oh! yes," she replied; and as she gave him her hand the three were gathered together—their arms entwined about each other—and, as they wept in their prayerful, joyous gratitude, those who stood around gazed from eyes as tearful as their own.

* * * * * * *

"Now," said the king, "let me finish my story. Of course you know who the prince, of whom I have spoken, was; and you know who his wife was; so I may speak of myself in what more I have to tell. Shortly after my messenger returned from Reynosa with the intelligence that the old knight was dead, and that his pupil had gone, the prince Nunez came to me with charges against a young knight of Cordova, as he represented it. I was too anxious about another matter to pay much attention to the charges thus preferred, and I bade my brother to have the knight arrested and examined. On the next night the lady Eleanor de Velasco came to me and asked to be admitted into the Almanzor prison to see Sir Enrique de Moneva. I asked her who and what he was, and she told me the story which you have all heard—how her father, the prince, and herself, with their attendants, were set upon by Bonovento and his band, and how Sir Enrique came up and slew the robber chief, and thus saved their lives. And then she told me how strangely the prince had been affected by the young knight's appearance, and how he had caused his arrest and imprisonment.

"I must have been foolishly blind at that time, for I did not suspect that the traduced knight was my own son. Fernandez of Arragon, the old soldier into whose charge I had given him, had changed his name without my knowledge, so that this clue, upon which I had mainly depended, was lost to me. But when, after a succession of sad mishaps, Eleanor came to me on the following morning, and related the story of her interview, I began to open my eyes. I knew that Nunez had always suspected the existence of the child somewhere; and since I had brought my wife to light his fears were made deeper; so I supposed he had seen and recognized the unknown prince. But when, after the long term of suffering which followed the diabolical event in the fire-chamber, I saw the young knight face to face, my last doubt was gone; and when he had told me the story of his life I simply KNEW that he was my own child. But I could not own him then. He was under a grave charge from the prince, and had demanded the right to challenge his accuser. It was hard work to restrain my emotions, but I managed to do it. And as I looked upon him then I did not wonder that the prince Nunez had known him. No one but a scion of our house could wear that face and form. However, I determined that he should be fully recovered ere he met his accuser in the lists, and I sent him back among the mountains to recruit his health and strength.

"After he had been gone some time I told the queen all I had discovered. She was overcome by joy and gratitude, and for a while seemed content to await her son's return; but finally she determined to go and see him in his retreat. She promised that she would not make herself known under any circumstances, and that she would return as soon as she had seen him. And, moreover, she wished to see a document which Sir Fernandez had promised to leave, in case he should be taken away, in a box which we had furnished him for that purpose. At length I consented that she might go, and having provided what we thought a suitable escort, she set out.

"And here comes the darkest chapter of all. The prince Nunez discovered that she had gone, and he at once set a band of assassins on her track. He thought Enrique was dead and buried, and now, if he could murder the queen, he would be the only surviving heir to the throne. Had this succeeded God knows how long I should have escaped his murderous hand. But God was not unmindful of the Right. By a miracle Sir Enrique, who was in the forest engaged in practice, was drawn to an out-of-the-way place where the assassins were upon the point of putting the queen to death, having killed her male attendants, and dragged her from her horse. He and his esquire set upon the ruffians, and quickly slew them all. But one man, ere he died, confessed that Nunez had hired them to do the murderous work. Our good Gomez Bambillo, here, has some credit for this fortunate result."

"Aye," responded Gomez, over whose ruddy face the tears and smiles had been coursing by twins, "and it was then and there that I first knew who my master was."

"You knew then?" uttered Enrique, in surprise.

"Yes. When the dying ruffian acted so strangely I knew he thought you were the king himself. Then I remembered how nearly like the king you looked, and I knew all. And I knew the fair lady must be the queen. But I dared not say anything."

"And you did right," responded Alfonso. "But let me finish my story now. The queen knew her son at once, but by a mighty effort she kept her promise to me. She went to his cot, and there she found the box, and in a secret apartment, which she knew of, she found the expected document. It was from Sir Fernandez de Guzman, and contained the assurance that Enrique de Moneva was the child I had given into his hands. He further stated that he had himself assumed the name of *de Moneva*, the more effectually to shield his charge. This finished the proof of Enrique's identity, though by his parents it was not needed. They knew their child, and their great love was awakened, without it.

"The queen returned in company with Sir Enrique, and has since kept herself secluded, as we did not wish Nunez to know of her presence. How my noble boy met his accuser you all know; and you know, too, how, by another seeming miracle, he escaped the second murderous attempt of the Prince de Castaneda, and how the blow that was intended for another fell upon the guilty man."

"It was not wholly a miracle, sire," said Jinchillo, half frightened at his own temerity.

"Aye—I know the important part you played, my good Jinchillo," returned the king.

"And now let me know who our good harper really is," urged Enrique, eagerly.

"That is easily and quickly told," said Alfonso. "His real name is Mida Jinchillo de Cantalega. He was a servant in the employ of Theresa's father when I first made his acquaintance. When the father died he made Jinchillo promise that he would never fail to guard and protect his daughter and her far-off child while he had the power. The old man knew that I could not always look after them with so many spies upon my movements, and as he had the fullest confidence in his servant's faith and honor, he left the charge with him. And Jinchillo has done his duty well. He has been a wanderer for long years—without a name and without a home—simply that he might watch and guard my wife and child without exciting suspicion. He has been the only messenger between myself and Fernandez, and his quick eye has detected many a shaft aimed at both myself and wife. Aye—Jinchillo has done his duty nobly. And so did Sir Fernandez do his with true and fervent zeal—for see what a son he has returned to me! God bless and rest his soul!"

"AMEN!" fell simultaneously from the lips of the queen and Enrique.

"Your brother has swooned, sire," said Espinar, approaching the king.

"Then let him be carried to his chamber. I will see him ere long. Sir Rinaldo, let your men bear him out."

As soon as the insensible form of Nunez de Castaneda had been born from the place the king moved towards the spot where stood the old count.

"Sir John," he said, with an earnest smile, at the same time taking the hand of the lady Eleanor, "what say you now? Shall I lay the command upon Sir Enrique which you requested?"

"Sire," returned the old noble, "I was doing then what I thought for the best; but things have changed. Lay your commands upon me now."

"Nay, fair cousin of Pedrosa, not so. Yet I will ask of you a favor. Let not this joyous occasion pass with any cloud upon it which may be removed. I am happy—the queen is happy. Why not make two more happy ones?"

The count bowed low, and then, without reply, he took the hand of his child and led her to the place where stood Sir Enrique.

"Prince Enrique," he said, frankly and openly, "for what is past a strange fortune is responsible, but for the future I may give you some source of happiness. If this fair child of mine has ever shown to me a fault, it was in disobedience to me by loving you; but henceforth I will make her love to you and duty to me one and the same. If you love her as I know she loves you, I shall not fear for the result. There—take her—and my blessing be with you both."

And as Eleanor clung to her lover's bosom, weeping in the wildness of her sudden joy, both the king and queen advanced to add their blessings.

"Surely," said Alfonso, turning to his consort, "the morning of happiness which has now dawned upon us melts away all the gloom of the long night we have passed."

"Aye, my lord," the queen replied, looking up through her tears; "and we will pray that God may be with us to the end."

At this juncture Espinar entered the apartment and approached the king.

"Sire," he said, "Nunez de Castaneda is dead!"

"DEAD!" repeated Alfonso, with a start; and in a moment more he added, in a devout tone, "I pray God had mercy on his soul!"

* * * * * *

Nunez had died from inward bleeding, and had not been sensible after he saw the queen. His crimes were forgotten in his death, and he was buried with a pomp befitting his rank; and on the day following, his three minions, Martello, Francisco, and Bernardo, were executed and buried, too.

The golden grain was ripe in the vallies, and the blushing fruit hung low upon both vine and tree, when all Burgos was illuminated, and the inhabitants thronged the streets in holiday attire, for it was the wedding-day of the Prince Enrique, Champion of Castile, and the fair Lady Eleanor.

"Egad," cried Gomez Bambillo, as he gazed into the blushing face of the lovely bride, "I'm sorry to say it, my fair mistress, but you'll lose your husband."

"How?" uttered Eleanor, with a start.

"Lose her husband?" echoed Enrique.

"Aye, my master—for you know you swore that you would leave Burgos when she became a princess. You did—don't you remember?"

"Ah," returned the happy youth, with a bright smile, "but she can go with me."

"And so can I," said Gomez.

"And I, too," urged Jinchillo.

"But you shall none of you go for the present," interposed the king, who had come up at that moment. "I have been too long separated from my son to spare him now. And you, good Gomez, are henceforth one of the lieutenants of our royal guard; so I think you will stay. And you, Jinchillo, continued Alfonso, turning to the faithful old servant, "shall be our royal harper, with just such a salary as you may dare to demand. I would not lose your harp for the best town in Castile, for its gentle notes will always bring to us echoes of the past, telling us of hopes fulfilled, and of the deep gratitude we owe to the Father of all mercies!" THE END.

AMERICAN IDEAS IN GREECE.

A LETTER FROM A RETURNED GRECIAN.

I was a Macedonian boy, when I first landed at New York, early in the war of Grecian independence, having been found by one of your humane American shipmasters, after my father's death, and brought away to save my life. Having completed the education secured for me by friends, I was sent back to Greece, with the expectation of easily finding some way to support myself. One of my benefactors had given me a volume containing some poetry written by a friend, with a request that I would present it to the daughters of the great Greek patriot to whose death it referred; and my first effort, after landing in Greece, was to find them. Having but little money left, I commenced the journey to their residence on foot, and then first discovered that I had lost the use of my native language. The few Greeks I had occasionally met during my long stay in America, seldom spoke anything but English, and I was not aware until I returned to Greece that I should have to learn my mother tongue anew, almost as much as if I had been a foreigner indeed. This filled me with sadness; and when I found myself in Athens, in utter poverty and friendlessness, straying daily to the prison of Socrates, to eat unobserved the bit of bread which soon became my only food, the feelings which sometimes came crowding upon me were of the most depressing kind.

In the midst of despair, however, suddenly hope shone upon me, like the sun from a cloud. An English gentleman engaged me to teach him Greek, which I had then in a considerable degree recovered. He did not know with what exquisite relish I dined with him at his hotel, after the conclusion of our agreement. Long abstinence had given me an appetite which I could hardly repress within the bounds of moderation. Oh! that more attention might be paid to young men, to discover their wants, which many of them are too proud or too modest to make known. And oh! that what I am about to say would make some persons duly cautious of speaking disparagingly of such young men as may be dependent on mere opinions, even for their daily food.

The next day, when I went to give my pupil his first lesson, I found a note from him, saying that circumstances had made it necessary for him to abandon his design of learning Greek from me. A thunderbolt could not have stupefied me more for a time than this intelligence. Absolute starvation, with the disappointment, came up before me; and as I staggered off towards my old refuge, Socrates's prison, I felt as if I had taken a dose more dreadful than his hemlock, and that, while no less certain that a speedy death awaited me, I was denied the presence of even a single friend. I afterwards learned that some person had made a disparaging remark of me in the hearing of the young traveler.

How different were my feelings within a few hours from that time! In one of the streets of Athens I met, as it were, a vision from a happy world—three young gentlemen, talking fluently in English, and speaking of their recent arrival from America; in one of whom I, at the next moment, recognized an old class-mate of New York. Joy and kindness, smiles and words of welcome, now surrounded me. And a few happy days, spent in their company, though soon ended by their departure, left me with a cheerful heart, and a small sum of money, which they had insisted on leaving, in return for my services in guiding and instructing them.

When left alone once more, I resolved to avoid a relapse into melancholy. And, with humble petitions for help to God, I resolved to act like an American, feeling that I had already departed from the exalted character which I had associated with the name of my long-adopted country. And here I must stop a moment, to make you realize, if I can, the conception which I have long entertained of the United States, and the influence which it has had on my life. The characters and lives of some of the best of your countrymen have always been before me, and I have had a restless desire to imitate them. Their essential principle appeared to me to be an untiring, practical philanthropy; and I now felt as if roused from a gloomy state of apathy and uselessness, the very opposite of the habits which I so much admired. I reflected that I was now in danger of relapsing into the same state, and resolved to place myself beyond its reach by resorting to the great American remedy, antidote, and preventive. Do you anticipate me? The examples of hundreds of thousands of American Sunday-school teachers were before my mind; I remembered my own experience among them; and I said to myself: "I must immediately begin that glorious work of gratuitous Christian instruction which makes Americans and America what they are, and which must some time or other make Greeks and Greece like them."

I hurried off, lest my resolution should fail me, to one of the most obscure habitations in Athens, where I had an acquaintance; and, after a little conversation, began to attract the children around me with a few cakes which I had bought for the purpose from my scanty purse. By questions and anecdotes, kind words and smiles, I soon gained the attention of the little ones, and, imperceptibly to them, laid a foundation for the future. I promised to return the next day, and soon had a little school in regular operation. The parents began to express their gratitude, mingled with great surprise; and I enjoyed the gratification of the success of an experiment, which gave me temporary relief from gloom and despair, and brightened the future with the hope of introducing into Greece what I regarded as the grand distinguishing feature of American society.

From the beginning I discountenanced every idea of reward for my labors, repeating that I was only acting as I had been taught to do in America; and when the neighbors came in, one after another, and modestly requested permission to send their little ones, to join my class, with offers of such payment as their humble circumstances would allow, I acceded to their request with readiness, but smilingly told them that I could not, as a Greek-American, accept any return. I sometimes partook of their plain food with them, and so was able the better to husband my very poor little remnant of money. But that was at length almost reduced to the last, when a great turn in my life came round. I was waited on by a man of great respectability, who, after making some inquiries, informed me that I was requested to take charge of a large public school. I found that my proceedings had excited the interest of the public authorities, who had waited to see whether I had perseverance enough to continue alone, and had just decided in my favor. Poverty and friendlessness took leave of me at that moment, and have never returned. I should be happy to give many particulars of my efforts and success in my course of enthusiastic devotion to education, and to sketch many interesting scenes and characters. I have since had a very large seminary of my own for many years; and many of my pupils are now in active life through Greece and other countries; several of them are merchants in New York and New Orleans.

I must not leave you now, however, without giving you one short example of the ways by which I made instruction popular around me. I had an old uncle, who was a Greek priest, attached to old customs and ideas; and he often remonstrated with me, sometimes very severely. I replied in this spirit: "Ah, I have been in America, and American principles and practices will reform the world. I intend to help them to reform Greece, and you are yet to be converted by them." "I will never go into your school-room!" replied he, indignantly. "You cannot stay out much longer," said I.

Sometime after this it was published through the town that a grand exhibition was to be given by my pupils, for which extraordinary preparations were made. During the last scene of the exhibition, it was known the lights were to be obscured through the hall, to give distinctness to the scene which was to be enacted on the platform, and it was rumored that nothing had ever been heard of which equaled that part of the display in originality and impressive effect. The evening arrived. The school-room was crowded. The exhibition proceeded; and the utmost order and cheerfulness prevailed, as in Greek assemblies generally—one of the remnants of their ancient refinement and old popular liberty. The last scene came on; the lights were obscured near the walls. I soon saw a movement near the door, and two or three large figures, in the light-colored dresses of priests, steal in to the most retired seats. The scene excited universal gratification; and just before its close I had the lights suddenly brightened. A murmuring sound, which expressed surprise, drew the eyes of the assembly to one part, and there was seen my old uncle, with two other priests, in full view, seeking to escape observation, but wholly unable to do so.

PATERNAL INJUSTICE.

Many a person has been misunderstood and unappreciated all through life in consequence of being misunderstood and unappreciated *at home.* The favorite child, though far inferior in every respect to the neglected and unloved one, will, if he be possessed of a *moderately* good disposition, and a fair share of affection, acquire a character for goodness and capability which will be as a part of himself. All his deeds and words are viewed in the best light, and the rule by which he is measured is a far different one from that by which his brother's course is followed. The reverse of this is equally true. In cases where the children go far from home, and settle among strangers, they escape this influence; but otherwise they are too often looked upon as their own household beholds them, and that is as through a glass, darkly, because of the unjust influence of partiality.

IDLE FEARS.

BY ALICE CARY.

In my lost childhood old folks said to me,
"Now is the time and season of your bliss,
All joy is in the hope of joy to be,
Not in possession, and in after years
You will look back with longing sighs and tears
To the young days when you from care were free."
It was not true—they nurtured idle fears—
I never saw so good a day as this!

And youth and I have parted—long ago
I looked into my glass and saw one day
A little silver line that told me so:
At first I shut my eyes and cried, and then
I hid it under girlish flowers, but when
Persuasion would not make my mate to stay,
I bowed my faded head, and said, "Amen!"
And all my peace is since she went away.

My window opens toward the autumn woods—
I see the ghosts of thistles walk the air
O'er the long, level stubble-land that broods:
Beneath the herbless rocks that jutting lie,
Summer has gathered her white family
Of shrinking daisies—all the hills are bare,
And in the meadows not a limb of buds
Through the brown bushes showeth anywhere.

Dear, beauteous season, we must say good-bye,
And can afford to, we have been so blest,
And farewells suit the time—the year doth lie
With cloudy skirts composed, and pallid face
Under yellow leaves, with touching grace,
So that her bright-haired sweetheart of the sky
The image of her prime may not displace,
Nor see the pain that underlies her rest.

THE TWO CROSSES.

FROM THE UNPUBLISHED CHRONICLE OF A TRAVELER.

On leaving the capital of Mexico, with my pack-mules and a guide, for Chihuahua, I took the regularly traveled route to Durango, and thence northward to the city mentioned. Until I had passed the latter city, I met with no further personal adventures worthy of separate narration; but a tragic tale, which was related to me on the way, may not be without its interest to whomsoever may peruse this transcript from my journal.

I had traveled all through the heats of a scorching day down the beautiful valley of the Rio Florida, when, toward evening, I came in sight of a well-ordered hacienda, where, my guide informed me, I could remain for the night.

Meeting a horseman near the gate, I accosted him in Spanish, and learning that he was the proprietor of the place, I requested permission to remain with him till morning. With the warm cordiality for which the true Spanish gentleman is noted, he replied:

"Welcome, Senor! In all that I can do to serve you, command me."

Riding into the *patio*, we gave our animals in charge of the attendants, and Don Alberto de la Mangua conducted me into his dwelling, where, after partaking of some refreshments, I was introduced to his wife and daughter, the latter being a very pretty and fascinating young lady of some twenty years of age.

In the course of our conversation, I requested the Senorita to give me the history of two crosses which I had observed erected together by the roadside, not far from the dwelling—the custom in Mexico being to erect a cross on the spot where any person has been murdered, at the foot of which each passer-by deposits a stone, at the same time repeating an Ave for the rest of the soul of the person murdered.

"Ah! *Santissima Virgen!*" exclaimed my fair companion; "there is a sad, sad tale attached to those crosses, Senor. It is but a few years since, that a worthy man, by the name of Pasquel, a cattle-herder, resided in a rancho some forty miles distant, having eight sons, all noted for their skill and dexterity in their calling.

"The two eldest of these sons, were the principal actors in the scene I am about to relate. The first, Leopoldo by name, bore off the palm of rancheral superiority—he being considered the handsomest of the two, and moreover possessing the advantage of having been educated in the city of Queretaro, which, in the estimation of the inhabitants of the *tierra caliente*, ranks second only to Mexico. The second son, Huberto, was less polished than his more favored brother, but of a generous, noble heart. Leopoldo could sing beautiful songs for the amusement of the Senoritas, but Huberto could lasso and throw the wildest bull; and while the former wasted his time in frivolous converse with other idlers, the latter was engaged in some arduous and useful labor.

"Now Huberto, who had always been the winner at the various athletic sports of the peasantry, invariably laid his trophies at the feet of one Senorita Claudina, a girl of sixteen, who was celebrated for her great beauty. During the absence of Leopoldo, she had been in a measure won by Huberto, by his presenting her with the prize which he had well earned at *el gallo*, and all the inhabitants rejoiced at the union which they thought must result; but on the return of the educated brother, he became struck with Senorita Claudina's beauty, and resolved to supplant Huberto in her affections.

"About this time Huberto was called away by business, and was absent several months; and during the interval, Leopoldo succeded, by flattery and a smooth address, in gaining the consent of Claudina to wed him instead of his brother.

"When the latter therefore returned, judge of his anguish on learning that she whom he had loved so fondly, whom he had adored so blindly, had forsaken him for a less manly, but more honeyed and polished, suitor. Deep and terrible were his feelings at first against that brother who had so dishonorably supplanted him; but the saints gave him their aid; and after a long struggle, he at last became resigned to his fate. Yet still his love for the false one remained, to burn even brighter with the lapse of time, for he was one who loved truly, and there was never a moment that he would not cheerfully have laid down his life for her.

"At last, the wedding-day being fixed upon, Huberto so far conquered his feelings as to resolve to take a part in the ceremony which was to make her, who had pledged herself solemnly to him, the bride of another. The nuptials were to take place at this hacienda, then the residence of the bride, and all the neighbors around were invited to participate in the festivities of the occasion, while Pasquel and his sons were to be special guests.

"Some two or three days before the one settled upon for the wedding, the latter rode into the hacienda, arrayed in their best, producing a buzz of wonder and admiration from the collected *rancheros;* and the next day the company, all except Leopoldo, proceeded to the plains, to drive in the bulls for the sports of the morrow.

"It was at the soft close of this fatal day, that Leopoldo and his intended bride were sauntering, arm-in-arm, at some distance from the hacienda. The sun was trembling at the gates of the west. Afar off on the distant plain arose the rugged crests of the Bolson, which went towering upward to the heavens, and catching in golden spangles the last rays of the departing god of day. Nature had provided the scene luxuriantly for the lovers, who, wrapped in their own happy dreams of present and future bliss, seemed to think of nought but themselves. Evening deepened as they walked and talked, and the Bolson grew dimmer in the darkening shadows which stretched cold and gray on the plain below. The shrill notes of the quail sounded clearly on the still air—the melancholy tones of the *grugas* came down from the clouds where they were wheeling their ariel flight—while the lowing of the cattle floated over the plain to their ears—the whole producing that harmonious blending of sound and scene which so sweetly lulls to a dreamy, poetical repose.

"'Dearest Claudina!' exclaimed Leopoldo; 'what a lovely scene!'

"'Most sweet! most beautiful!' returned his fair companion. 'And yet, Leopoldo,' she added, with a long, deep sigh, 'I feel sad, very sad—something oppresses me as with the weight of coming danger!'

"'Ha!' replied her lover, as with his arm he encircled her fair form, 'what danger can reach you, with Leopoldo by your side? Know you not how devotedly I love you? that all I have is yours? that I would give my life for your happiness?'

"She raised her dark eyes, and, brushing away a tear, murmured gently:

"'Forgive me, dear Leopoldo, for being sad when you are present! It might have been the weight of coming happiness which my superstitious nature wrongly interpreted! Ha! see!' she added, in a more cheerful tone, and pointing to a cloud of dust near a line of distant chapparal; 'yonder come the bull-fighters, and to-morrow is our wedding-day. Let us return and give them a happy greeting!'

"Her thoughts were even then of the wronged Huberto—but his name passed not her lips, and Leopoldo knew it not.

"'Yes, they are my brothers,' he replied, glancing at the approaching horsemen, 'and we will give them the greeting of two happy hearts.'

"Suddenly, with a wild shriek of alarm, Claudina threw herself into the arms of him who was in honor bound to protect her, exclaiming:

"'They are Indians! they are savages! Save me! save me!'

"Leopoldo again turned quickly, and saw with horror that they were indeed savages—a large band of fierce Camanches, who, naked to the waist, were brandishing their weapons and rushing toward them with demoniac fury—and with the sight the real nature of the cowardly youth became manifest.

"Reckless of the fate of the fair trembler by his side, and thinking of nought but his own miserable existence, he disengaged himself from the clinging girl by force, and bounded away at the top of his speed, shouting as he ran:

"'*Los barbaros! los barbaros!*'

"He was met on the way by a single horseman—his wronged brother Huberto—who had been riding toward the hacienda—but had heard the wild cry of the coward, and perceived his brother flying alone.

"Wheeling his horse he had dashed quickly to his side, exclaiming as he reached him:

"'Claudina! Claudina! what of her?'

"'Yonder! *los barbaros!*' gasped the white-lipped and trembling coward, pointing back to her he had deserted.

"Huberto followed with his eyes the direction to the spot where the fair Claudina was still standing terror-stricken, gazing helplessly toward her approaching foes.

"'Coward! her blood be upon your dastardly head!' shrieked Huberto; and burying the rowels in his horse's sides, the nextm oment, with the speed of the whirlwind, he was thundering over the plain to the rescue of her who had played him false.

"Claudina heard his stentorian voice, as he neared and shouted to her to fly to him; but paralyzed with terror, she stood rooted to the ground, and could only clasp her hands and shriek:

"'*Salva me, Huberto! por Dios!*'

"On, on rushed the lover to his lost love—nearer and nearer drew the savages to their victim—he straining with all his might to reach and save her he adored, and they rushing forward to her destruction.

"Suddenly, one fiercely-painted warrior shot forward ahead of his band, with his spear ready poised for the fell work of death. His horse, urged to his greatest speed, Huberto saw with agony must reach her in advance of his own.

"'Father in Heaven, save her!' hoarsely shrieked the agonized lover, as again and again he plunged the rowels into the bleeding sides of his gallant steed.

"Now came a wild, fierce yell of triumph from the Camanche Chief, as he saw that the prize was his; and as the awful sound rung shrilly over the plain, Claudina dropped upon her knees, clasped her fair hands in a mute appeal for mercy, prayed fervently for salvation, and awaited her doom.

"It came—not mercy, but the doom. The savage was too near—the lover too distant—and the eyes of the former glistened like living coals as for an instant he pointed the glittering steel of his spear. The next moment, driven by terrific force, it went crashing through her delicate breast, literally pinning her to the earth. Wheeling his horse and bending from its body, the Camanche buried his murderous fingers in the raven locks of the fated Claudina, and another moment saw the gory scalp swinging in the air before the eyes of the now maddened and infuriated Huberto.

"But the triumph of the savage Chieftan was only momentary; for scarcely had his fiendish yell announced his victory, when, with a yell even wilder than his own, the avenging lover proclaimed himself within a fatal distance—the almost unerring lasso, thrown by his strong arm, encircled the neck of the savage with a snap—and the next moment, torn from his own beast, he was being dragged over the plain at the heels of that of his foe.

"But alas for the brave Huberto! who had been too intent upon rescuing or avenging the fair Claudina to save himself from the yelling band who had managed meantime to cut off his retreat, and who now began to close around him! Drawing his short sword, he turned in his own defence, and clove the nearest through the brain; but a dozen arrows at the same moment hurtled from as many bows, and the poor lover found himself pierced with many bleeding wounds. Still seeking vengeance, and caring nought for life, now that she he loved was no longer among the living, he continued to charge the savages, who gave ground before his single arm, though showering upon him their arrows from beyond his reach, till at length one buried itself in his breast, and he fell from his horse to rise no more.

"Meantime, with loud shouts of encouragement to him and defiance to his foes, his father and brothers had been rushing to his aid; but they reached the ground only in time to see his scalp torn off in triumph. Dauntlessly they charged the Indians in turn, and the fight became fierce and furious. Six Camanches bit the dust, and two of Huberto's brothers lay bleeding on the ground; when, darkness beginning to settle over the earth, and the Indians, finding their foes were about being reinforced by a party of rancheros from the hacienda, turned and fled, leaving their enemies masters of the field.

"It was a sad scene which followed, Senor—but I need not dwell upon it. A rude litter was constructed, and, side by side in death, as they should have been in life, the bodies of Huberto and Claudina were in solemn procession borne back to the mourning hacienda; and the next day, at the hour which would have otherwise witnessed her nuptials with another, saw the beautiful form of the girl laid in its cold, narrow home, beside that of him who had loved her best in life and proved it by his untimely death. Over their double grave the two crosses rise to mark their awful fate and demand from the passing Christian a prayer for the rest of their souls."

FEVER.

Translated from Perez, a young poet of Bogota.

It follows, burns, consumes me,
Nor leaves a moment's rest;
Parches my lip, my palate dries,
Scorches my very breast.

My weary frame can bear no more,
Death only brings repose;
The fun'ral pall and silent stone,
My busy life must close.

Ah, what is life, thus to be whirl'd
Through laughter, grief and joy?
How vain those visions false, the world
Brings now but to annoy!

With beauteous beams the days come on,
With beauteous beams depart;
But wakeful nights attend on me,
Sad days, a breaking heart.

WILD HOGS IN THE WEST.

Hogs are generally allowed to roam about the prairies and woods at will in many of the Western States; but most of them habitually return to their owners once a week, "to be salted," (that is, to be fed with salt). Some return more or less frequently than this; but there are often a number which never come near a human habitation. This has a strong influence upon their nature. They usually become more wild and unmanageable, the longer they are shut out from intercourse with men. It seems as though they can never get rid of the fear of man, or the habit of submitting to him, when they have once obeyed him, or ever been under his rule. Therefore, hogs that stray off from a plantation, and never return, are believed never to become very wild, certainly not altogether savage. But such as have been born and bred in the woods and prairies, are quite different animals. It is generally thought, and I believe it is true, from what I have heard and seen, that the entire nature of the original wild animal breaks out, and shows itself, in full vigor, in such cases. They are formidable animals; and people not only avoid coming in contact with them, but are always on the watch for them, when in the timber, or other places frequented by them, ready to turn away at the first notice of their approach. After I had become acquainted with their savage disposition from hearsay, and especially after I had examined their long tusks, and seen their furious movements and savage aspect when exasperated, I never rode carelessly in the neighborhood of any covert where a wild hog might be concealed. I was always on the alert; and the first sound of their grunt and squeal, which they give, on the sight of a man, was quite sufficient warning for me. I never stopped to dispute the right of way, or to make curious observations, much as I was devoted to the practical study of natural history. I drew off by the most safe and convenient path, and left the child of nature to himself.

The face of a wild hog has a very different expression from that of a tame one. Two long, white tusks grow down from the upper jaw, one on each side, three or four inches in length; and, when the animal is enraged, he draws up his upper lip in such a manner as to make them appear much longer, and give him a most savage expression. To see one charging through the woods, right at you, as I have sometimes seen them, is one of the most frightful sights in the world. And they make dreadful work with any creature they attack, raising the head, and bringing their tusks to do awful execution, cutting and tearing the flesh in the most horrible manner.

AN OLD BORDERER.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

I. G.—As you have your naturalization papers, you are a citizen of the United States. If the judge erred in giving them to you, that was his fault. You acted in good faith. No one can go behind your papers, now that you have them in due form. Were there anybody who would take the trouble and go to the expense of hiring a competent lawyer to get up a case, presenting all the facts, and proving that you were not lawfully entitled to your papers at the time they were granted, it is possible that the court would revoke them, although, as you are *now* entitled to your papers, it is doubtful even if the court would deprive you of them. It is quite certain, however, that no one would be apt to go to the trouble and expense of testing the question.

An Orphan.—Read "The Lives of Eminent Merchants." That will give you the best hints for fitting yourself for mercantile life. You can get the book at almost any bookstore, and if it be not on hand the bookseller will order it for you.

John.—It is useless to attempt to decide whether Washington or Napoleon was the greatest general All such attempts to compare great men are futile. Each is greatest in his sphere. Napoleon could never have carried on the war of the Revolution successfully, and Washington in France would have been turned topsy-turvy, and probably guillotined. Napoleon was too dashing and reckless a man for an American Revolution; Washington was too sensible and good a man for continental Europe.

B. H. C.—When a young man sends a bit of poetry to a girl, and she acknowledges the receipt of it, or answers a letter that he has written to her, it would not be impolite for him to refrain from writing to her again.

G. E. R.—It is useless for you to attempt to excuse your conduct towards your mother. A son who will swear at his mother, and raise a cane to strike her, no matter what the provocation, has only to acknowledge his unnatural wrong-doing and ask forgiveness You ask what else you could have done without compromising your dignity. In the first place, your dignity is of no consequence; and in the second place, you did the very thing to compromise it. Had you said, "Mother, it seems to me that you are acting unjustly to your son, but I will submit without a murmur, as it is impossible for me to offer violent opposition to her who gave me birth," and then walked away, we think that "your dignity" would have been in a much better state of preservation than it is now.

Human Nature.—Your "cause of complaint" is not such a horrible one as you imagine There may be many good reasons why your friend has not paid you the sum loaned to him. And even if he should prove to be a base and heartless knave, there is no reason why your hair should stand on end about it. The world holds a good many base and heartless knaves. Borrowers infest every community, and a thorough-going *borrower* is a perfect vampire. He will prey on friends as well as on foes, and knows no mercy and no shame. His heart cannot feel and his cheek cannot blush. You have probably had your first touch of experience with one of this detestable class, and by making it a warning for the future, you may, after all, turn it into a good speculation.

T. H.—You had better read historical works at first, and books of travel. Then read the standard English works—those of Shakspeare, Milton, Addison, Pope, Carlyle, Macaulay, Brougham, Byron, Scott, Burns, &c. You should also read, with especial attention, American history and biography. The works of Homer and Virgil can no more be read in translations with the same satisfaction as in the originals, than Shakspeare could be read in another language with as much satisfaction as in English. The exquisite delicacies of thought and expression which constitute the bloom and fragrance of a great genius's style, always perish in a translation, as does the delicious flavor of tropical fruits transported to other climes.

Indignation.—You are of course at liberty to bring an action for damages against the man who slapped your wife in the face, and if you can prove the facts to be as you have stated them to us, you could probably get a heavy verdict. You should look at the matter dispassionately, however, and set at work in the clear light of reason, else you may make some mistake that will give your opponent an advantage. We cannot give you advice as to the manner of giving your testimony on the trial. All you can do (or at least all you *should* do) is to tell what you believe to be the truth, and that you should tell in the most straightforward manner possible.

Warrensburg wants to know if it would be proper for a young lady to pull her lover's nose on finding him in a state of intoxication in a public party. The reason the question is asked is that a young man "of that section" recently had his nose pulled by his sweetheart under the circumstances mentioned. Although a lover would deserve to have his nose pulled if he should get drunk, we do not think that any *lady* would volunteer to do the job, though there are doubtless some *females* who would delight to execute the task. It is improper for a woman ever to commit an unnecessary act of violence in public or elsewhere.

Bancroft.—Your so-called problem is no problem at all. You say a man having sixty dollars in cash dies, leaving the *whole sum* to be equally divided among A, B, C and D, giving to A one-third, to B one-fourth, to C one-fifth, and to D one-sixth of it. This is wrong on the face of it, inasmuch as one-third, one-fourth, one-fifth and one-sixth, added together, do not make one whole number. Thus, one-third of $60, is $20; one-fourth of it, is $15; one-fifth, $12, and one-sixth $10; and these sums added together make only $57.

Goliath.—In the first place, you are probably mistaken as to the young lady's having *designed* to insult you by declining to go with you to the concert. You have no business to assume that she meant to do any such thing. In the next place, even did you positively know that she intended to insult you, *that* would furnish no just grounds for your retaliation. The fact that *she* had done a wrong thing, would give you no right to plan out and execute a *mean* thing. Petty meanness is always reprehensible as well as despicable.

M. D.—There are many cheap circulating libraries in New York and Brooklyn, where you can get the loan of books at from two cents to four cents a volume by the week, or for one cent a day. You can find these establishments by looking for them. Many newsdealers keep books to lend on such terms. Were you able to pay $5, you could become a subscriber to some of the large libraries and get all the books you could read in a year.

Invalid.—As you allowed yourself to be persuaded to disregard the directions and advice of your physician, he of course is not responsible for the sad state in which you now find yourself. The efficacy of a remedy often depends on the following out of the physician's directions as to the administering of it, with the minutest accuracy. You did *not* follow out the physician's directions in your case, and therefore the consequences must rest upon your own head.

S. T.—You should return the young lady's letters, and her daguerreotype and other gifts, if she insists upon your doing so. It is always best for a man to act with the utmost liberality and highmindedness in such unfortunate matters. They are disagreeable enough at the best; and the only solace a gentleman can derive from the recollection of them is the remembrance that *he* acted in the most irreproachable and generous manner.

K. R.—You of course should "know your man" better than we do. Under the circumstances we think you had better begin to foreclose the mortgage at once, so as not to lose time in case the mortgageor does not pay as he agreed to do, and have an understanding with your attorney that the suit shall be discontinued on certain terms whenever the money shall be paid.

E. French.—You could buy land in abundance and at fair prices in Wisconsin, Minnesota, or Iowa. You must select your "location" for yourself. You cannot very well go amiss.

W. E.—You should have crossed the street with the young lady to avoid the crowd, when she requested you to do so.

A. R. L.—You had better go to school whenever you can get a chance to do so.

Virginia.—To indicate that you want a word of your manuscript set in italics, draw a line under it.

Ann Arbor.—We charge four cents a piece for back numbers of the Ledger.

Colonel.—You and the clergyman were right in your advocacy of social singing. A good song, well sung, in the family circle or at a cosy party, is one of the best things imaginable. We do not know as we can give you such instructions as will make *you* a superior singer, but we can lay down the general rules bearing upon the subject. He who aspires to the character of a social singer, and would sing with comfort and credit in private parties, must possess, 1st. A voice. 2d. A considerable share of modest assurance and presence of mind. 3d. Excellent wind. 4th. Good taste in the selection of his songs. 5th. Good understanding, that he may know what he sings. 6th. Imagination and passion, that he may feel what he sings. A public singer may be destitute of all these qualifications except the first and second, and yet by the direction of others, by management and by imitation, may pass very well; but no man can be a good private singer without them all. His voice must be powerful, that it may be heard, that it may affect, that it may move, that it may overpower, yet not too loud, lest it should annoy, and torture, and distress and deafen. He should be able to sing boldly and freely, but no less able to sing faintly, sweetly, and, as it were, dyingly. By an excellent wind, it is meant that he should have that power, that compass and variety, that hight, and breadth, and depth of voice, which may no less express every pathetic feeling than every manly sentiment, avoiding the boisterous extreme on one hand and contemptible whining on the other. There is great art in commencing a song in the proper key; yet cleverness in that particular is indispensable, otherwise the singer seems to be running a race or paying a penalty, rather than singing for amusement. Time should be ordered not by *beating* it, for that is unpardonable, but by favoring the expression in such a manner as to excuse any liberties that may be taken in this particular The singer must cunningly profit by every sentimental pause to collect his scattered breath; yet this should be done without gasping, as the tragedians do, without that perpetual winking of both eyes, so commonly affected among public singers, and without any ungentlemanly effort or straining. Nothing hurts a singer so much as not thinking well enough of himself. He should know his own value, and sing upon it, without overrating either his efforts or his merit. If he fancies his sounds are never to be forgotten, he is mistaken; and he may be assured, let him sing as well or as ill as he chooses, his song will soon be thought of no more. But it behoves him to cast out all fear and trembling, to begin calmly, collectedly, courageously; let him be spirited where he ought, and insinuating where he may, but let all be done coolly and with something of dignity, so as to seem to say that, however delightfully he may sing, singing is rather the result of his other accomplishments than his only excellence.

Boy Subscriber.—How is it possible to determine whether Washington or Jackson was the bravest man? Neither of them, so far as history informs us, ever flinched from any danger that ever crossed his path; nor is it probable that danger could have appalled either the one or the other. They were not made of the stuff which yields to, or flees from, difficulties or dangers of any kind. You can get all the back numbers of the Ledger you ask for, at four cents a piece We will take postage stamps for the odd change.

Sailor.—We know that men often get situations as supercargo, but whether or not *you*, or any other particular person, could get such a situation is more than we can tell. Your only way is to try. Make the acquaintance of shipowners, and others engaged in commerce, and make your application for a berth whenever and wherever you think there is a chance of success.

An Inquirer.—It is impossible to say who first applied steam to the working of machinery or the propulsion of boats Crude experiments, which had barren results, are reported of many unfortunate inventors and experimentors in these matters. Robert Fulton, however, was the first man who succeeded in making steam navigation a real practical, paying thing.

S. M. W.—The name of our esteemed contributor, Saxe, is pronounced as a monosyllable, *saxe* or *sacks*. Your desire to know how to pronounce a name that has become a "household word" throughout the length and breadth of the land is perfectly excusable, and requires no apology. The sirname of Charlotte Bronte is pronounced in two syllables—*Bront ay*—with the accent on the first.

Amelia.—It is not improper for a lady to ask a gentleman to call again, even though he has visited her but once, if she is satisfied that he is an honorable man, or, in other words, that he is really a gentleman. If he is a stranger, however, and she knows nothing about his character, she should not be in haste to invite him to call on her.

Diosco.—We cannot say what it would cost *you* to keep a yacht or a span of horses. The expense of such luxuries varies, in this city, from $200 to $2,000 a year, over and above the first cost of the yacht or horses. In some cases, the expenditure occasioned thereby exceeds $5,000 per annum, but that, of course, is a piece of extravagance.

Butter.—Eighteen and three-fourths pounds of butter at eighteen and three-fourths cents a pound, would come to $3,51 and nine-sixteenths of a cent. This answer to the question (which was asked by a correspondent in the Ledger of October 16th) has been sent in by numberless correspondents.

B. R., Rome, Tenn.—You should consult some experienced physician as to the course of reading a medical student should pursue who is not able to go through a regular course. The phrase *nom de plume* means an author's *pen name*, or name assumed for literary purposes. Your other questions we do not care to answer.

Milkmaid.—You had better not grieve too much over the desertion of your false-hearted lover. A man who thinks the less of you because you honestly earn your own living, is not worthy of such a treasure as the affection of a pure-hearted girl.

Diana.—All we know about natural history is what we have read. We have never "wintered and summered" with animals for the purpose of watching their habits. As naturalists concur in saying that the antlers of deer are shed annually, we believe that they are so shed.

S. B.—There is considerable difference between six dozen dozen and half a dozen dozen. Half a dozen dozen are seventy-two, and six dozen dozen are eight hundred and sixty-four.

Badger.—Your question is an impracticable one. Literary excellence cannot be measured and computed like material quantities, and no one but a natural born fool would attempt to say who is the best writer in America.

Q. R.—A gentleman should sit at the right hand of a lady at table, so as to be able to wait upon her the more easily. It is a matter of taste whether they should enter a hotel dining-room arm in arm or not.

Medora.—A gentleman should be introduced *to* a lady, and not a lady to a gentleman. The lady's name would of course be spoken first, as: "Mrs. Smith, permit me to introduce to you Mr. Jones."

Stephen.—The aid of distinguished men, if they have influence with those now in power, would help you very much in getting an appointment as surgeon in the United States army.

Young Mathematician.—We cannot answer your question, inasmuch as you have not stated whether there are to be partition walls to the building, or how many of them, nor what the dimensions of the brick are to be.

Seringapatam.—We do not see how you could do yourself any injustice by again giving your daguerreotype to the young lady. Such little "spats" should not be made so much of.

Affliction.—We do not know whether your eyelashes will ever grow again or not, nor do we know of any balm, wash, or ointment, that would make them grow.

J. P. K.—It is useless for you to attempt to fight in public against a lady. You had better come to some reasonable arrangement of the matter, and have the suit discontinued.

Pidendick.—We know nothing of hair-producing or moustache forcing balms, unguents, and washes. The best thing you can do is to wait nature's developments with patience.

Henry D.—Having joined the military company you are bound by their rules and regulations, and will have to pay the fines they have imposed for neglect of your duties.

Sol.—An author inscribes or dedicates his works to show his regard, respect, admiration or gratitude to or for the person or persons he selects for such public notice.

Saxa.—The Honorable Mrs. Norton, whose domestic troubles were so much talked about a few years since, is the authoress of the verses known as "Bingen on the Rhine."

Steam.—All you have to do is to behave yourself in the best manner you can, and let your enemies snap and snarl to their heart's content.

R. N. B.—As your father is a naturalized citizen, you will also be a citizen five years hence, that being the time when you will become twenty-one years old.

Young Inquirer.—The comet recently seen in the evening and the one seen in the morning are one and the same. It is called Donati's comet.

B. B.—If you are morally bound to pay the debt, you of course ought to pay it, whether you are legally bound to do so or not.

A. E., Brooklyn.—As your parents think you should send your relative your daguerreotype, there would be no impropriety in your doing so.

S. L. R.—You cannot get an appointment to West Point as long as there is no vacancy in your district.

Captain.—You had better arrange the matter. Your rank gave you no right to strike a private soldier.

Richard H., Belleview.—If your Ledgers do not come to hand it is the fault of the post-office.

Jerry.—We never heard that olive oil is injurious to the hair.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*